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ANTON RUBINSTEIN.

A RETROSPECT.

By FR. NIECKS.

FOR a long time the conservatives in music had it all their own way in England, and the state of the art was consequently one of stagnation. Latterly a fresh current has begun to flow into the dead pool, and new life and activity, full of bright hope for the future, are the result. Conservatism may now do good service as a drag, checking the inconsiderate and headlong adoption of the new, as there is a party of progress strong and brisk enough to act upon it as a spur, pricking onward those who otherwise would hold too tenaciously and exclusively to the old. Thus, with the growth of liberalism, there has risen a greater tolerance even among the most orthodox. Formerly every musician of a pronounced individuality that visited this country had to run the gauntlet of the champions of conservatism, and so severe a passage was it that many a one succumbed, and some turned back before they had gone far. At the present day newcomers are, on the whole, received with less suspicion and exclusiveness. This change is, perhaps, in part owing to the artist that, more violently than any other, shook the pillars of tradition, and had the boldness and strength to make a firm and victorious stand when the infallible judges of what is beautiful, who had driven Rubinstein away a few years before, held it to be their duty to rise against him like one man. I mean, as no doubt you have guessed already, von Bülow. Now it is beginning to dawn upon the arbitrators in matters of taste, that more than one interpretation of a work of art is possible without all but one being wrong; and some day, let us hope, it may even flash upon them with the brightness of a mid-day sun, that no one interpretation exhausts the sum of a great composer's intentions, and that all interpretations are true only to a certain extent. But more of this anon. I now come to the event which gave rise to these considerations, namely, Rubinstein's last concert-tour in this country. The one thing in connection with this artist's reception which must have struck every attentive observer, is the contrast between the enthusiasm of the audiences which crowded his concerts, and the cool, carping, and often wholly adverse criticism of the press. That the upholders of tradition did not befriended him cannot surprise any one; that the men of more liberal views should withhold their support, and even turn against him, must have been a puzzle to many. It has been suggested that Rubinstein's hostile attitude towards Wagner may have influenced (unconsciously, perhaps) the partisans of the great master of modern musical drama in their judgment of the Russian pianist and composer. Whether this suspicion is well founded or not I do not venture to decide, and, indeed, it would be difficult for any one to do so. However, looking at criticism as a whole, without distinction of party, one may say that what it in some instances accomplished is truly fabulous. As a specimen, I will quote a passage from an article by a well-known writer in one of our chief musical papers. "Disregarding the marks of the composer," he writes, "clipping rests, and playing wrong notes can scarcely, we should imagine, be considered improvements even by those who are so 'highly developed' as to look

with contempt upon the 'purists,' who reverently set the author of a work above themselves." The writer of the above, judging from what he says about Rubinstein seems to have found nothing to admire in the great pianist's playing—the bad qualities so far out-weighting the good that the latter might be wholly ignored. Now, it is this dwelling on faults and concealing of virtues, or at least the giving of disproportionate prominence to the former, which I thought reprehensible in most of the written criticisms of the time. To be sure, Rubinstein is not perfect. He is a bright star, but one that does not shine with a steady light. He is subject to moods. But although Ernst played at times so out of tune that nobody could listen to him, was he not still one of the greatest violinists the world had seen? I know no pianist who makes a deeper impression upon his audiences than Rubinstein; and, again, none of the same artistic importance who oftener rouses a spirit of contradiction in the mind of the cultivated hearer. The impressiveness of Rubinstein's playing arises from its spontaneity; the waywardness and inequality flow from the same source. Indeed, you cannot have the peculiar excellencies without the corresponding shortcomings. The warm life of spontaneity and the unswerving accuracy of clockwork will never be found in one and the same person. A few extracts from two notices by a French critic may find a place here, as his remarks are to the point, and will give me an opportunity to advert further to some of the charges made against Rubinstein. As far back as 1858 M. Scudo wrote: "We already know M. Rubinstein, we were among the first to do justice to the vigorous and powerful talent of this artist, who has not yet attained the number of years to become the first pianist in Europe. M. Rubinstein possesses a peculiar aptitude in seizing the style that suits the music of each master; he combines power with grace, he plays the delicate works of Chopin as well as those of Beethoven or Weber, when he does not allow himself to be carried away by the vainglory of wishing to prove too much, thereby overshooting the mark, as was the case in the Concertstück by the composer of the "*Freischütz*." Rubinstein does, indeed, sometimes try to prove too much, the consequence of which is, as will be generally admitted, that he overshoots the mark (his rendering of Chopin's A flat Polonaise, and of Schumann's Etudes symphoniques, may occur to the reader as instances in point), only it is not the vainglory of shining, but the ardour of his nature, which prompts him. If Rubinstein is to be blamed for any fault, it is his want of self-control. But to return to M. Scudo: "It is impossible to hear anything comparable to the march from Beethoven's *Ruins of Athens* arranged and performed by M. Rubinstein. It is as if a whole orchestra *dinned* (*bruit*) in his fingers of steel, which flash out the strange sounds of this savage music, conceived by a very civilised genius. I very much admire the bearing of M. Rubinstein, who does not give himself the airs of a hero of romance, but is calm before his fingerboard, as it befits a great artist who respects the public whose votes he seeks." In a notice written by the same critic in 1857, there are some remarks which are especially noteworthy on account of their bringing out graphically a fact which the public at once understood, but which many of the critics overlooked. Although some of the statements with which the writer begins are rather bold, and at most true only in a general way, I prefer giving the passage in full. "After all, the piano is played only in Germany, as the violin is naturally played only in Italy. The Corellis, Tartinis, Pugnani, Viottis, Paganinis—that is to say, the greatest violinists in the world—were all Italians, as Bach, Haydn, Mozart,

Beethoven, Hummel, Weber, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Liszt, Thalberg, the creators of pianoforte music, as well as the most eminent artists who have most thoroughly mastered the mechanism of this difficult instrument, were born on the other side of the Rhine. No doubt the piano is cultivated with success in France, and there, perhaps, are to be found the best school of violin playing and the most perfect orchestras in Europe. Nevertheless, these are there only the results of a tenacious will, lacking the spontaneity of nature, without which nothing great is possible in the arts. At the end of a few years the sap of inspiration is dried up; one knows no longer to what mediocrity to devote one's self; one tires of hearing so many poor fellows hammer out sounds without ideas. Happily, there comes all on a sudden a real artist like Chopin, Liszt, Thalberg, or M. Rubinstein, who raises the public taste, and opens new horizons." Herein lies the importance of Rubinstein, "he opens new horizons;" he teaches you what you have not understood till he made it clear to you; in short, he makes you feel that you have before you a "real artist," one by the grace of God, as well as by his own industry. Now one other short passage. "His prodigious execution combines the force and impetuosity which one admired in Liszt, and the delicacy of touch which characterised the playing of Chopin. No difficulty arrests Rubinstein. He masters his instrument as a Cossack of the Don masters his full-maned, long-tailed horse, whose savage ardour he bridle at will." The French critic, struck with the indomitable spirit and impetuous character which speak out of the pianist's performances, hits here on a happy simile. Nothing could better describe certain characteristics of his playing. This indomitable spirit and impetuosity, often so beautiful in their manifestations and achievements, always so imposing, are the cause that the strong individuality of Rubinstein comes at times too much into the foreground when he interprets the works of other masters. They make him overstep the latitude which must necessarily be allowed to executants; but the liberties taken at a moment of enthusiasm, a slip of the memory or of the hand, do not justify the language used by the first-mentioned critic. For Rubinstein is too true an artist to set himself intentionally above the author of a work. I therefore repeat that the proportion of praise and blame meted out to Rubinstein was not just. And as to the dictum that the executant has "to set the author of a work above himself," true as it is, it is more easily said than acted upon. What are the intentions of the author? Can you trust to the signs? Or is tradition a sure guide? The inadequacy of the signs is pointed out by Liszt in the preface to the score of his *Festklänge*. He says there, "By the minute employment of the usual signs and expressions I have tried to make my intentions, with regard to the *nuances*, acceleration and retardation, as clear as possible; nevertheless, it would be an illusion to believe that one can fix on paper what forms the beauty and character of a performance. The talent and the inspiration of the conducting and executive artists alone possess the secret of it, and the portion of sympathy they will be good enough to accord to my works will be the best pledge of their success." So much for signs. As to tradition, little need be said. Every one knows what changes the songs of the people undergo in the course of time, and in the passage from one province to another. We know this because we possess the earlier forms of many of these songs in notation. Now, if tradition allows such changes to take place in the things which are fixable by signs, how much greater will be the changes in what is less palpable and not fixable by signs! The degree of correctness in the interpretation of a

musical work is proportionate to the degree of sympathy existing between executant and composer. If the composer plays his own compositions, even he fails sometimes to be in sympathy with himself—i.e., with his own self of another hour. Indeed, as Mendelssohn very wisely remarked, it is *überhaupt mit einer musikalischen Tradition ein schlimmes Ding*. Whatever precautions the composer may take, he is still to a great extent at the mercy of the executant. For unless the spirit of the composition is understood by the latter, and not merely the notation deciphered, the author fares badly. But a composer can only be fully understood and interpreted by a nature which is the exact counterpart of his own, and which possesses all the physical means and their proper degree of artistic development for the expression of the meaning read. As there are no two faces, no two limbs exactly alike, so there are no two minds which in some particulars do not differ from each other. Accordingly, you will always get only a partial interpretation of the composer's intentions, an interpretation which falls short of the subject interpreted, and must fall short, firstly, because of the want of the adequate understanding; secondly, because of the want of the necessary means of expression; thirdly, because of the colouring imparted to it by the interpreter's individuality—that is, if he happen to have one. And if he has none, or one not sufficiently developed, his interpretation is not worth having. A borrowed individuality does not mend matters much; it is like a *plat rechauffé*. Be a pupil's reading of a master-piece ever so correct an imitation of his teacher's playing, it will nevertheless have but small artistic value except as regards technique. Depend upon it, wherever an interpreter shows real insight into an author's meaning, you find his own individuality likewise impressed upon the interpretation. Vigorous mental power and fine emotional perceptivity are inconceivable without a pronounced individuality. He, therefore, who lacks the last, cannot be in possession of the two former, and consequently cannot comprehend other natures, and cannot follow their train of thought and feeling. If you wish a spiritual interpretation, and not merely a mechanical reading of a work of art, you must take an admixture of the executant's individuality into the bargain; and I think one may well make that allowance to the man who "opens new horizons."

And now I will try to contribute a few touches to a sketch of the artist Rubinstein. What strikes one first in his playing and in his compositions is an all-pervading freshness and air of inartificiality, that tell us at once that the outcome of the musician is a faithful reflection of the man. All is healthy and strong. The health seems to be indestructible, and the strength is so exuberant as at times to burst out irrepressibly and tumultuously with a Titanic animality. Passages in his works, and moments in his pianoforte performances, will no doubt suggest themselves to the reader. But the Titan who now ejaculates words of command or imprecation, who raises or hurls colossal rocks with superhuman strength, who grasps his enemy with iron hand, breathes out in the next moment his love and tenderness in fond whispers, and his hands stroke as softly as no hand of woman ever did. In short, a healthy manliness is the chief feature of his character. With the morbid, the *Weltschmerzliche* (the world-weary, if I may say so), the vague, the dreamy, the transcendently sensuous, he has nothing to do. He shows a predilection for great canvases, and grand and simple subjects. He is less successful in miniature-painting, and in things that require much attention to detail. This is not said in ignorance of his many shorter pianoforte pieces and songs, some of which are very

beautiful, but in which it is impossible to overlook his *penchant* for grandeur and breadth. Then he walks rather the broad highways than explores the narrow by-paths of feeling. I suspect there is more vitality in his instrumental than in his vocal music; but my acquaintance with the latter is not comprehensive enough to allow of my asserting this. Rubinstein belongs to no school, he is too independent for that; neither, I think, will he found a school; to do that he would require to have greater originality than he has,\* or to be more of a mannerist. As the form of his countenance shows some similarity with that of Beethoven, so also does his character as expressed by his music. He has something of Beethoven's sweep, grandeur, and massiveness; but he lacks Beethoven's power of digesting, sifting, evolving, and ordering. He is not fastidious enough in the choice of his thoughts—he does not know how to wait for the happy moment, and hence we find in many of his works commonplaces side by side with noble thoughts. Indeed, he has published much that is unworthy of him, and only a few of his greater works attain that perfection of contents and form which satisfies all claims that may justly be made on a work of art. Still, there are some works among his numerous productions which, being free from disturbing elements and gross imperfections, may be enjoyed wholly and fully. Such are, for instance, the sonata, Op. 39, for piano and violoncello, and the "Ocean" symphony (especially the first movement, less the last one), &c. But whatever Rubinstein's compositions can be reproached with, at least it cannot be with want of nerve and verve. And now I will conclude these remarks with a wish that the great artist may soon visit us again, and then find everywhere the recognition he deserves.

#### GÖTZ'S FRANCESCA DA RIMINI.

It is but two years ago that the theatre at Mannheim had the merit of bringing out Götz's first opera, the *Taming of the Shrew*; it has now had the privilege of introducing to the public his second—and, alas! his last—opera, *Francesca da Rimini*. The production of this work was looked for with unusual interest, for the great and deserved success of his first opera had given rise to very high expectations for the future; and it was naturally an interesting speculation whether the composer would master so grand and dramatic a subject as that of Francesca with the same felicity with which he had mastered Shakespeare's waspish Kate.

And Götz has not disappointed his friends; nay, *Francesca da Rimini* has surpassed their most sanguine expectations. It has now been given at Mannheim four times; and though as yet it only exists as MS,† I need not apologise for briefly discussing the leading features of a work which appeals so warmly to our sympathies—not only by its intrinsic merits, but by the exceptional circumstances connected with its completion and production. And assuredly to review *Francesca da Rimini* is at once a pleasing and a sad task: pleasing, because it is a work revealing singular beauty of thought and style; sad, because a young and talented composer wrote it, so to speak, with one foot in the grave, and not only did not

live to witness the success it has achieved, but was even denied the satisfaction of completing it.

The touching drama in which Francesca da Rimini, her lover Paolo Malatesta, and Lanciotto Malatesta, Duke of Rimini, were the chief characters, was enacted at the Court of Rimini, during Dante's lifetime, who, an exile, had found a powerful protector in Guido da Polenta, Duke of Ravenna, and Francesca's father. The incomparable lines in which the poet has immortalised his benefactor's unfortunate daughter, and which form one of the brightest gems of the "Divina Commedia," are familiar to all readers of Dante; and Götz's opera seems to echo the sympathetic tone in which Dante addresses Francesca's shadow:—

"La mia Francesca, i tuoi martiri a lagrimar  
Mi fanno tristo e pio!"

The history of the heroine, which Leigh Hunt made the subject of a poem, has more recently been dramatised by Silvio Pellico and by Paul Heyse; and Götz's admirable libretto is chiefly from his own pen; but the plot is so well known that I need only notice the leading incidents of the dramatic action, which Götz has distributed over three short acts.

Guido da Polenta, Duke of Ravenna, has induced his daughter, Francesca, to become the wife of Lanciotto Malatesta, Duke of Rimini, as the only means of putting an end to the feud between the two ducal houses. She had at last consented to the hateful union, believing her lover, Paolo Malatesta, Lanciotto's brother, to have found his death in the Sicilian war. But the report of his death proves false: he returns, loaded with military honours, and, not aware of Francesca's forced marriage, hopes now to make her his own. Francesca, dreading a meeting with him whom she had never ceased to love even when she thought him dead, refuses at first to receive him. But both Lanciotto and her father, ignorant of the true cause of her refusal, insist; and at last she yields, though with a sinister presentiment that her fate is sealed. Francesca and Paolo meet; their passion revives, and the flame is only fanned by the knowledge that she was forced to become Lanciotto's wife for political ends, and under the plea of her lover's death. But they are surprised by Lanciotto. Paolo is thrown into prison, and a tribunal of monks condemns both Francesca and Paolo to death. Francesca's father offers to obtain Paolo's release if the lovers will renounce each other. They are once more brought together, but only to affirm that death alone shall separate them. Lanciotto surprises them a second time, and, suspecting a conspiracy to effect their escape, plunges his dagger into Francesca's heart. She dies in her father's arms, blessing the dagger that ended her misery. Paolo is rescued by his men, who have come to claim their general and rally round him; and Lanciotto is led away by the priests.

Götz's libretto departs from the historical version of this celebrated drama in one or two important particulars. According to the latter, Lanciotto, Duke of Rimini, was a hateful, ugly, and deformed man—a sort of Richard III.; in Götz's version he is an imperious, stern, and jealous, but a stately, imposing personage. Again, we know that Lanciotto murdered both his wife and his brother, whereas Götz allows Paolo to be rescued by his men. Nor is it likely that Guido, the Duke of Ravenna, who did not scruple to force a repulsive marriage upon his daughter to secure peace with a rival duke, was the feeble old man of the Polonius type, whose part in Götz's opera is rather a humiliating one. I cannot help thinking that the dramatic force of the whole would have been enhanced had the historical version been retained in its integrity;

\* To avoid misunderstanding, I add that Rubinstein at no time of his life was a plagiarist, or even imitator, that his originality is considerable and not wholly reducible to peculiarities of nationality; but that the forms of his thought and its expression are not of that projecting kind, if I may say so, which impresses itself clearly on one generation and extends its traceable influence far into the future.

† *Francesca da Rimini*, edited by Franck, is now in print. Publishers: Kistner and Co.



indeed there seems no apparent reason for departing from it. But the character of the heroine is drawn with exquisite taste. The intense passion of an Italian Leonora is tempered by the poetic softness of a Genoveva or an Elsa. Nor is the libretto wanting in those graceful and homely touches by which it contrasts so favourably with the conventional high and dry libretto style of so-called "grand opera."

In the musical treatment of his grand subject, Götz has been faithful to the polyphonic form and lyric style which made his first opera so attractive. As the *Taming of the Shrew* abounds in melody, so is *Francesca* an unbroken chain of pathetic airs and ensembles, coupled and interwoven with graceful arioso recitative. The concerted numbers of the score are patterns of neat, clear, original, and effective writing. The instrumental colouring, though full, is most judiciously subdued throughout, and is marked by an extremely sparing use of brass instruments. In short, the whole work consists of pure, refined music, and confirms the opinion I ventured to express in a review of the *Taming of the Shrew*—that Götz combines in a rare degree that peculiar genius of Gounod which almost spent itself in *Faust*, with the depth of Schumann.

The part of Francesca is written for soprano; that of Paolo for tenor; Lanciotto is baritone, and Guido da Polenta is bass. Francesca's is undoubtedly the most difficult, as it is also the most dramatic part; and the part of Paolo is worthy of a greater tenor than Mannheim boasts at present. Lanciotto's part is highly effective, whilst that of Guido da Polenta rather lacks vigour. The most beautiful of the three acts is unquestionably the second, which culminates in the meeting between Francesca and Paolo, their surprise by Lanciotto, and the *dénouement* of the drama. The duet between the lovers is of surpassing beauty, and its climax has—though in a more restrained, or shall I say, purer form?—something of the swing and abandon of the great duet of Tristan and Isolde about it.

This rapid sketch will suffice to show that in this posthumous work Götz has left us an opera of the very first order: not only is it fully equal to his *Shrew* as regards wealth of melody, original treatment, effective and refined writing, but it shows greater depth and breadth, and is, I think, more transparent, more mature than his first opera. Götz must have been deeply imbued with the mournful strains in which Francesca relates her sad story in Dante's "Inferno;" for through the whole work there runs a certain vein of sadness; and the predominance of string instruments, the frequent employment of muted strings and cello obligato, impart to Francesca's airs an unspeakably soft, plaintive, almost ethereal character. In this respect, the tone of the opera is not unlike that of an elegy; and it was probably not without a sad presentiment of his own approaching end that the composer introduced in the last act of his last work the mournful chorus, "*Mediâ vitâ in morte sumus!*"

Götz did not live to complete *Francesca*. The completion and production of this beautiful work are due entirely to the active conductor of the Mannheim Opera. Franck's disinterested devotion to the task he had undertaken, and his exertions to produce *Francesca* in a manner worthy of his friend, deserve the highest praise. He scored the whole of the third act from Götz's sketch, and the overture is entirely his work. Like a true artist, he abstained from disturbing the unity and continuity of the work of which he is the distinguished chaperon, and so entirely has he sunk his individuality, so skilfully has he carried out the intentions of the composer, that it is impossible to trace in it any but Götz's own pen. I

understand that, after completion, the opera had the advantage of a final inspection by Brahms.\*

The performance at Mannheim showed, by its admirable precision of soli and ensembles, the infinite labour which Franck had bestowed on the rehearsals, a labour but rarely appreciated to its full extent by a fastidious audience; for the performance, it may with truth be said, *c'est ce qu'on voit*; the labour preceding it, *c'est ce qu'on ne voit pas*. And the labour was the greater in this case, because the Mannheim Theatre, though it boasts an excellent band, cannot command first-rate artists. But a performance like this has, at any rate, the great advantage of being original and inspired by the master.

Franck has just accepted the post of conductor at the Frankfurt Opera, and doubtless *Francesca* will not only be produced there, but follow in the path of the *Taming of the Shrew*, now a standard opera on all leading German and Austrian stages. Will these beautiful works in their turn be produced in London? This is, perhaps, too sanguine a hope; but that they should be produced is, nevertheless, "a consummation devoutly to be wish'd."†

C. P. S.

#### GOUNOD'S OPERA, *CINQ MARS*.

MESSRS. SCHOTT AND Co. have just issued a pianoforte score of this the last published opera of M. Gounod, which was produced with so much success recently in Paris. The libretto by Messrs. Paul Poirson and Louis Gallet, well designed and full of dramatic incident, does not, however, present so great an object of interest for musical readers as the character of the music with which it should be the present purpose to deal. With this view a short and running commentary upon the several pieces composing the opera is here offered.

*Cinq Mars* is not, strictly speaking, an opera so much as a melodrama, for the main part of the dramatic action is carried on without the aid of music, which is only used to illustrate the more forcible dramatic situations. It is said, however, that Gounod is revising and setting the dialogue to music for the purposes of grand opera—the present edition has only the music as it has been already performed.

In the four acts there are twenty-six pieces, all more or less marked by that individuality of character for which Gounod has made himself distinguished among the writers of his nation. The several *morceaux* have all the lighter grace of the French school, and many have an additional undercurrent of solidity, the result of an early study of Palestrina and other later writers of the severer ecclesiastical school, as well as a desire to make the music of the style in vogue at the date of the drama. There is, undoubtedly, a general flavour, so to speak, of a characteristic colouring peculiar to the period of the time at which the action of the drama is supposed to occur, and this goes a long way towards giving artistic value to the general design. In some of the details may be observed certain phrases and turns of thought already familiar as well in Gounod's own works as in those of other writers. Still, as illustrating the dramatic action, there is doubtless much that is both clever and appropriate, while at the same time the question whether

\* The result of this was that Brahms so thoroughly approved Herr Franck's share in the work, that the credit of the task of completing his friend's opera entirely belongs to him.—Ed. M. M. R.

† An English version of the *Taming of the Shrew* having already been published (by Messrs. Augener and Co.), its performance in London will doubtless follow in due course.—Ed. M. M. R.

*Cinq Mars* would have made the composer's reputation, or would have commanded special attention, had he not been the author of *Faust* and *Marguerite*, still remains an open one. The prelude to *Cinq Mars* recalls most strongly the opening of *Faust*, and the first scene and chorus, though not exactly note for note with certain parts of the garden scene in the same opera, brings it most vividly to the mind of the hearer. The form of the Chorus No. 3, "Reine, je serai reine!" and the construction of the chords accompanying the recitative, of which he makes frequent use, will be recognised by all who know even a little of Gounod's music.



The Chorus No. 4, which follows, has the first real melody which has as yet appeared; it is lively and tuneful, but, unfortunately, it carries with it the suspicion of being a reminiscence rather than an invention, and if it is not actually like some one particular tune, there are hundreds that are like it—more especially among the German *Lieder*.



It is set for tenors and basses, and would probably be effective, for the form of it is agreeable, the melody tuneful, even if it is not original. The recitative and cantilena, "Nuit resplendissante," which succeeds as the next number, is but another version of "Salve Dimora," yet is nevertheless elegant as a composition, and, as far as can be judged by the pianoforte score, is well designed for instrumental effect. The duo for *Cinq Mars* and Marie, the last piece in the first act, is a fine piece of impassioned writing, fully worthy to rank with the best of the efforts of the composer as well in this opera as elsewhere.

After a short prelude, the second act commences with a chorus of a lively strain; but the first striking *morceau* in this act is the song for Fontrailles, with a chorus. Here again the similarity of the melody to the serenade "Catharina," in *Faust*, will not fail to make itself observed. It is notwithstanding a fine song, well laid out for the voice, and likely to be very effective when well sung. The likeness of the melody to one already known is no particular disadvantage when both are the offspring of the same parent-brain; in fact, the resemblance is to some extent a proof of its genuine, if not legitimate, origin.

The chorus, "Ah, monsieur le grand écuyer!" has a quaint rhythm, and a no less quaint melody, constructed out of very simple materials; and another cavatina for *Cinq Mars*, though short, is bright and full of passion. The concluding piece of this act—a trio for Father Joseph, Marie, and *Cinq Mars*—is one of the most cleverly-written pieces in the opera. The treacherous snake-like character of Le Père Joseph in the drama seems to be

most strongly indicated by the following ingenious sequence:—



The whole of this trio is very finely conceived, as regards its dramatic as well as in its musical character; the exaltation of the two lovers, and the *asides* of Le Père Joseph, being well wrought out.

The opening symphony to No. 13 might have been written by Handel, so thoroughly does it reproduce his train of thought and mode of expression. In the whole of this scene the music breathes strongly of the style of the early part of the last century; so, with little effort of imagination, the hearer might consider that he was listening to an actual production of the period, and not to cleverly simulated music. If the character of the scoring is equal with the form of the phrases, the illusion would be complete, and the hand of the dial of time would appear to have been put back most gently and deftly by the author of *Cinq Mars*.

In the dance-music Gounod has been no less happy. The "Danse des Bergères" has a droll and distinct pastoral character, which will make it popular in or out of the opera. In the ballet with a chorus, the "Entrée des Petits Soins" of the *Billets-doux*—lively imitations of the time of Couperin and Bach—and in other portions of the ballet-music Gounod has maintained his old reputation. The several movements bring so many distinct pleasures, and the whole affords a delight none the less keen because of its old-fashioned character.

One of the most pretentious scenes in the opera—"La Conjuración"—is also the least original, for it is difficult not to perceive that the model upon which it is based is Meyerbeer's "Blessing of the Daggers," in *Les Huguenots*. It, however, brings the second act to a noisy if not to a brilliant end.

The third act has an introduction for horns, the scene being supposed to be represented by huntsmen. To English ears the phrases are familiar, Sir Henry Bishop having made them so by means of his well-known glees, "Foresters sound the cheerful Horn," "With Hawk and Hound," and others of a hunting character. This resemblance is, of course, purely accidental.

There is an effective scene of a *quasi* recitative form, with more phrases of Gounod-like familiarity, and this is followed by a *mélodrame-scène* for the conspirators, in which the motives set forth in the prelude to the opera are

again used. A fine and stirring song for Le Père Joseph, "Tu t'en vas confiant," in which Gounod asserts his musical individuality, would probably have a grand effect when well sung; but the duet which follows for Marie and Le Père Joseph is, if not actually vulgar, at all events distinctly commonplace.

The hunting chorus, "Hallali," is exactly like every other chorus for the like purpose, probably because the number of horn passages being limited, the number of melodies capable of being constructed upon them is equally so.

The one other cavatina, "O chère et vivante image," is but a poor weak ballad of the ordinary type; and the duet for Marie and Cinq Mars, probably intended to be passionate and fervent, just falls short of its purpose, and gives the idea of having been written either for an opéra bouffe or with an eye to future usefulness in the form of arrangements, transcriptions, quadrilles, or galopades. It is a kind of melody technically known as one to "rouse the gallery," and it cannot but be regretted that the opera should be weakened, if not actually disfigured, by its introduction.

The duet for De Thou and Cinq Mars, with which the opera closes, is a stirring piece of writing, in which again the motives of the prelude are ingeniously employed. With this the opera ends.

The impression created by the perusal of the work as music, is that Gounod has added scarcely anything to our pleasures, and little to his fame, by the composition; but, of course, it is difficult to judge finally of a work depending much upon orchestral effects by the reduced edition of a pianoforte score. A general notion of its value as constructed music is all that can be obtained by the reading and study of the printed notes alone. In a living voice *Cinq Mars* may have a different aspect, and may possibly prove that Gounod has made a great advance, instead of a retrogression from his former work, *Faust* and *Marguerite*. If, however, present impressions are of any worth, posterity will know him by his former, and not by this his latter work.

#### MUSIC IN GLASGOW.

THE opening of the new public halls recently erected in Glasgow was inaugurated last month by a series of musical performances on a grand scale, instituted by the Glasgow Choral Union, and which took place in the music-room attached to them, and which forms one of their most important features. This is described as being one of the finest, as well as one of the largest, in the kingdom. Its length is 185 feet, its width 75 feet, and its height 58 feet, this measurement being larger than that of the Manchester Free Trade Hall, the Town Hall of Leeds, and both St. James's and Exeter Halls, London. Among the most conspicuous features of this imposing room is an organ containing sixty-four sounding stops, built by Messrs. T. Lewis and Co., London.

The inaugurative performances, which took place on the 13th, 15th, and 16th ult., included the *Messiah*, of which we need not speak; Professor G. A. Macfarren's new cantata, *The Lady of the Lake*, of which we shall have an opportunity of speaking on its being performed, as promised, at the Crystal Palace; and a Beethoven concert, principally orchestral, conducted by Dr. Hans von Bülow, and of which we much regret that we are not able to speak from our own experience. Recognising the occasion as one which, on account of its musical importance, ought not to be passed over in silence, we, contrary to our usual custom, append an abridged notice

from one of the local papers. The programme as actually performed stood thus:—

OVERTURE in C .. .. .	"Weihe des Hauses," Op. 124	
MARCH AND CHORUS .. .. .	"Ruins of Athens,"	
ARIA .. .. .	"In questa Tomba"	
SYMPHONY No. 8 in F .. .. .	Op. 93	Beethoven.
OVERTURE .. .. .	"King Stephen," Op. 117	
SIX VARIATIONS ON AN ORIGINAL AIR in F major .. .. .	Op. 34	
SONG .. .. .	"Nature's Adoration"	
FANTASIA FOR PIANOFORTE, ORCHESTRA SOLI, AND CHORUS		

The critic of the *North British Daily Mail* writes:—

"Without intending any implied disparagement to the two concerts which had previously taken place in the new hall, we are inclined to think that most lovers of the highest and best in instrumental music will have looked on the concert of last night as the actual 'consecration of the house.' A programme devoted entirely to the works of Beethoven, of Beethoven at his brightest and best, and these works rendered in a way hitherto unknown here, made the concert one of the memorable events in Glasgow musical experience. The symphony had, of course, been given before in Glasgow; but until last night we must admit that what the symphony really has to tell had never the chance of being rightly understood here. It is in music of this particular kind that the conventional style of correctly playing it down—if we may so translate the telling German phrase, 'herunter spielen'—tells most fatally. The finely-pointed phrases, the wit of repartee, the graceful, tender fun—all alike are lost to the unpractised ear, and fail entirely in their intended effect. What remains is only a feeble, and comparatively meaningless, flow of sound. The version heard last night was full of vigorous life and refined vivacity. We have never heard the work more perfectly given. The orchestra is excellent, no doubt; but it is useless to say again how largely even the finest orchestra is indebted to—nay, we may say, at the mercy of the conductor. According to the modern idea—and that a most justly founded one, we believe—everything rests on him, from poetic interpretation to the elementary matter of accuracy. Dr. von Bülow's remarkable ability as a musician and conductor is well known. His memory and absolute mastery of all he undertakes remain as exceptional as they are marvellous. Let none doubt, after this concert, the power of a true master to make the orchestra follow his will to the very utmost. The concert concluded with a performance of the 'Choral Fantasia,' such as will remain memorable to all who saw and heard. None but a musician of transcendent ability and power would have dared to keep the reins of leadership in the hands which were at the same time to execute a most difficult pianoforte part. Yet this Dr. von Bülow did not fear to do, and the result proved his entire justification. With no other leader than himself could the combined force of chorus, orchestra, soli, and pianoforte have been carried through to such fiery and triumphant conclusion. We believe that probably no other living musician could have done what Dr. von Bülow did, compelling his musical force to a magnificent rendering of the work, and the audience to an enthusiastic appreciation such as Beethoven probably never before received in Glasgow. An apology was made for Mr. Carrodus, who was prevented by illness both from conducting the 'Choral Fantasia' and playing the violin romance in G. As a substitute for this number, Dr. von Bülow played Beethoven's Variations on an Original Air in F major (Op. 34). The two vocal numbers of the programme were admirably sung by Mme. Patey."

#### LETTER FROM SONDERSHAUSEN.

October, 1877.

AT the close of the letter from Sondershausen that appeared in the October number of the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD, I said that a Raff and a Rubinstein concert were announced to take place at the end of September, and that (D.V.) I would attend them and send you an account of them. Well, the concerts did take place on the appointed days; your humble servant was permitted to be present, and, mindful of his promise, he is now sitting, pen in hand, to redeem it. No more trying ordeal for a composer can be thought of, I imagine, than that of having to provide all the material for a miscellaneous concert. Better men even than Raff and Rubinstein have failed to come out of such an ordeal triumphantly—indeed, only the choicest spirits, two,



three, or four, perhaps, of the great masters, would have any chance of doing so—if, therefore, I say that I found a whole evening concert of Raff, and still more a whole *matinée* of Rubinstein, too much, it by no means implies that I have not a high opinion of these artists. The Rubinstein programme was not fairly representative of the composer's achievements; one as interesting as the Raff one might have easily been devised, for Rubinstein, although a less ingenious craftsman than Raff, is not inferior to him in creative power. The programme of the concert which took place on the evening of the 29th of September consisted of the following works by Raff:—

1. *Die schöne Müllerin*. String quartet, Op. 192 (No. 2).
2. Three songs with pianoforte accompaniment, from Op. 98 and Op. 173.
3. Concerto for pianoforte with orchestra, Op. 185 (in C minor).
4. Three songs with pianoforte accompaniment, from Op. 98.
5. Fantasia for two pianofortes, Op. 207 (manuscript—new).
6. "Frühlingsklänge" Symphony (No. 8, A major), Op. 205 (new).

Of these the symphony and the fantasia are new works; the latter is still in manuscript, I shall, therefore, speak of them first. The four movements of the symphony are respectively named "Spring's Return" (*Frühlingsrückkehr*), "Walpurgis Night" (*Walpurgisnacht*), "With the first Nosegay" (*Mit dem ersten Blumenstrauß*), "Longing for Travel" (*Wanderlust*). As I have heard the symphony only once, and have not seen the score, I am not in a position to judge of the work; I can only record my impressions. The first movement is *astir* with a mysterious activity that illustrates well the movings and throbs of nature which precede the birth of spring. However, the themes seem to me to lack the impress of nobility. The second movement is the most original and most important of the whole work. Those who define music as the art which pleases the ear and pricks the imagination into an agreeable activity must reject this composition; but those who give to the musical art a wider scope will gratefully accept this wild fantastical conception, this wonderful, powerful picture, painted with all the ugliness of reality. I think I still hear the violinists tearing a melody out of their G strings, the violoncellos *pizzicato* and "the woods" following, and then those mad outbursts of the horns and trumpets. The third movement is melodious, and as sweet as the thing it is intended to suggest. The last movement I hold to be the weakest, the reckless bustle seems also to express something else than *Wanderlust*. I doubt if the symphony will become a great favourite either with musicians or the general public. The fantasia for two pianos, on the other hand, is a composition which will soon make friends among the lovers of this *genre* of music. It is true, here and there this composition does not rise above the sparkling elegance of Raff's salon-pianoforte style; but it is not without its more significant moments, and on the whole satisfies and produces a most pleasing impression. The playing of it by Mme. and Herr Erdmannsdörfer was exquisite. A better performance is almost inconceivable, as it was not only exact and well balanced, but also refined and intelligent. The concerto is a composition which aims higher, it has more dignity and more body than the fantasia; the composer, however, is not able to keep himself on the same height—the last movement does not come up to the first. Still, unless we compare the concerto with the very best of the kind, we cannot but give it unlimited praise. The concerto was executed by Frau Erdmannsdörfer Fichtner. She plays with confidence and unflinching certainty. Her style is bold and passionate, her execution clear, her touch light and firm, as the occasion may demand. But at times she exaggerates; boldness becomes pertness, warmth and energy of expression degenerate into violence. In short, in trying to

do her best, she goes beyond what is possible for her to do. These little spots, however, are insignificant compared with the great excellencies of her playing. With regard to the reading of the concerto, I may say that the first two movements were beautifully rendered, but that more might have been made out of the last. The string quartet, "The Maid of the Mill," differs in form and contents from what one is accustomed to in quartets. It consists of six movements, most of them short and light. They are entitled—1. *Der Jüngling* (The Youth); 2. *Die Mühle* (The Mill); 3. *Die Müllerin* (The Maid of the Mill); 4. *Unruhe* (Restlessness); 5. *Erklärung* (Avowal); 6. *Zum Polterabend* (For the Nuptial Eve). Of these the second is the most taking, but also the slightest, the first the weightiest, the last the most unsatisfactory, and the fifth the most beautiful. The last-mentioned movement was played best. Herr Petri and Herr Wihan enacted their parts of maid and youth with the truthfulness of experienced lovers; they sighed with a sweetness which was quite bewitching. The second violin and viola parts are very subordinate in this movement, and this is the reason why the playing of it was so much finer than that of the rest of the quartet. It is the old story, every one will play first fiddle, thus it happens that these parts are generally not so well represented as the first violin and the violoncello. Two musicians are taken out of the orchestra, may be very estimable and clever men in their way, but who have not the lightness of bow and fingers, the refinement of manner, requisite for the kind of music in question. Instead of a quartet, it is a very common thing to hear two duets, the one being played *comme il faut*, the other awkwardly and roughly. Much might be said in praise of the singing of Mme. Rabatinski Zacharia, formerly a member of the Vienna stage, now retired with a rich husband into private life; but the shakes with which she thought fit to embellish (?) the songs disgusted me too much to allow me to speak calmly of her performances.

I now come to the Rubinstein *matinée*. The programme was as follows:—

1. Quartet, Op. 66, for piano, violin, viola, and violoncello.
2. Aria from "Faramors."
3. Concerto for violoncello, Op. 65.
4. Fantasia for two pianos, Op. 73.
5. Songs from Op. 34.
6. *Romance et Caprice*, for violin and orchestra.
7. "Faust," *Ein musikalisches Charakterbild*, for orchestra, Op. 62.

For the quartet which was to open the *matinée* the sonata, Op. 19, for piano and violin, was substituted. The work is a fine one, and was worthily played by Mme. Erdmannsdörfer and Herr Petri. In the last movement both did their utmost; less, however, would have attained more. This piece to be rendered effectively requires a pianist of the gigantic power of a Rubinstein, and a violinist of the same mettle, and perhaps even then we should admire it as an imposing display of brute force rather than of spiritual or sensuous beauty. The concerto for violoncello had unfortunately to be omitted on account of the illness of Herr Wihan. What I heard of it at the rehearsal made me wish for a fuller acquaintance with it. The omission was the more to be regretted, as the work seemed to suit the style and taste of Herr Wihan. Frau and Herr Erdmannsdörfer played this day, as on the preceding one, a fantasia for two pianos, and played it, if some mishaps are overlooked (turning two leaves instead of one, &c.), equally well. But the composition, notwithstanding its many beauties, is not wholly satisfactory; above all, it is too long. I don't know what demon suggested to me the question, "What is worse than a piano?" To which, of course, the answer is the

same as that to the well-known question, "What is worse than a flute?"—namely, "Two."

Herr Petri had a *Romance et Caprice* apportioned to him. The *Romance* pleased me more than the *Caprice*, the principal themes of which are indeed characteristic, but the working out of which seems to me a little too capricious. Herr Petri's rendering of the *Romance* left nothing to be desired. The song-like passages he played with beautifully pure flowing tone, and the runs and *floriture* with clearness and elegance. His rendering of the *Caprice* was not quite so good, as in his endeavour to be energetic and fiery, he failed to pay sufficient attention to the beauty of sound. This, however, is a temporary aberration of a young artist, which promises better than sentimental whining and timid groping. As to the lady, I remain, for the above-mentioned reasons, again silent. The last piece on the programme, the only one which I have not yet adverted to, was "Faust." It is an imposing work, and instinct with power; but I must confess I was unable to take a firm hold of it, unable also to perceive the connection between the character of Faust and this musical work. The almost ceaseless surging and storming which I met with there, I do not find in my conception of Faust. Here ends my second and last letter from Sondershausen; when I write again, it will be from another part of the habitable globe. F. M. N. PEREGRINUS.

#### BENEVOLENCE AMONG MUSICIANS.

THERE are few musicians in full work who have not experienced the distress caused by the occasional call to relieve some fellow-labourer who has been reduced to poverty by disease, accident, or misfortune. The case they are asked to soothe by contributing to may possibly be their own to-morrow, for there are many among practical musicians who do not earn enough to enable them to set aside a part as provision for future emergencies. They call to mind the many times they have helped some charitable cause, and sigh to think that for themselves as well as for the members of their profession no sufficiently adequate society exists as it should for their solace and comfort. It is time that the charity of musicians should begin at home. It would be both instructive and curious, and probably interesting, as well to amateurs as to professional men, if it were possible to obtain a statistical account of the amount of money collected throughout the length and breadth of the land for the purposes of charity by the agency of musical performances. Of course, the record or the statement should be confined to those performances of what kind soever in which the several executants had "generously given their services." When it is considered that at more than one concert in London alone distinct sums of £1,000 or more are annually placed to the credit of the several institutions, and that equally large sums are raised in the provinces for benevolent purposes, chiefly through the kindness of musical artists, who combine to give an exceptional entertainment and forego their claim to the usual fee for the occasion; it is not difficult to believe that the cause of charity in its various phases is largely aided and strongly supported by the musical profession.

It is a fact no less singular than it is indisputable, that while musicians are called upon from all sides and at frequent times to exercise their talents in aid of some deserving charity—for all charitable ventures are more or less deserving—they are rarely called upon to work for an institution by which the suffering or disabled members of their own profession can be benefited. As a general rule, relief is afforded to some distressing case of poverty or affliction by means of that private operation technically called a "whip round;" that is to say, by inviting subscriptions in a sort of *impromptu* form among personal friends to meet the urgency of the case it is desired to relieve. Among musicians this process, it must be admitted, is often very productive, thus proving the existence of kindly hearts conjoined to skilful hands. Few complain of the frequency with which these "whips round" sometimes occur. All are ready to give their mite, with a kindly word to boot. A ready response is given,

for the reason that most musicians know that such calls will from time to time be made upon them, and there is no provident fund or benevolent society to which such claims can be referred. Why, then, should not this benevolence be concentrated and properly organised? Why should not a society be formed for the relief of the stricken and unfortunate who cannot or have been unable to help themselves? In the want of such a society musicians enjoy a singularity beyond all other professions and trades. The only societies existing and open to musicians are those which benefit only the provident. There is more than one institution which affords relief and support to its members should they require and desire such. It is not, however, the virtue of all men to be foreseeing. Present prosperity is for many continuous prosperity; and when the dark day of distress comes it brings for them both blindness of heart and despair. Others there are who have not more than is necessary for their existing wants, and who cannot, though they may so wish, lay by for the time of trouble. How many there are who earn only enough to keep life in themselves and their dependants! Yet even these are always willing to help cheerfully and readily to the extent of their small means, or, having none of this world's goods, never grudge to exercise their talents for the benefit of a distressed brother. All this is satisfactory evidence of the goodness of heart and the kindly disposition among musicians in the cause of charity. What now is needed is that no part of this willing readiness to help should be lost, but that it should be directed into a channel by which all may derive advantage.

Musicians should promptly, seriously, and energetically set themselves to form a benevolent society of their own. The earnestness with which they work for others should be concentrated in a series of efforts on their own behalf. All musicians, and most of those interested in musicians and the cause of music, could help to form a fund which would soon become a worthy one, for the cause is worthy.

The poor we shall always have with us. Such an association as musicians could form if they chose would provide for the poor in a proper manner. The simple qualification to be admitted to the benefits of the fund should be the qualification of having been or being actually a musician, now perhaps in poverty, sickness, or distress. Peculiarities of creed or of nationality should be no more hindrances in the way of making a claim to the fund than they are to the possession and the exercise of the talents possessed by the claimant. All musicians in prosperity would subscribe to such a fund, which might afford a refuge, a comfort, or a stay in the days of adversity. Moreover, many would be spared the pain which the inability fully to relieve some more than usually distressing case might cause them personally, by being able with pride and satisfaction to refer the sufferer to the rulers of the fund, who would carefully investigate, give timely aid, if need be, continuous relief, and so save the necessity and often inadequate provision of the temporary help afforded by a "whip round."

#### Foreign Correspondence.

##### MUSIC IN NORTH GERMANY.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

LEIPZIG, November, 1877.

AT the second Gewandhausconcert we heard the first novelty of the season, viz., a concert-overture, "Am Strande," by Robert Radecke, Hofkapellmeister at Berlin. The piece commences very melodiously, but does not continue so. The instrumentation is clever, and deserves praise; but the construction is faulty. On the same evening we had excellent performances of Beethoven's "Eroica" symphony, and the concerto in two movements (for string orchestra, in G major) by J. S. Bach. The latter is not one of the best works of the celebrated St. Thomas' "Cantor," and bears more the stamp of the time in which it was written than any of his vocal works or organ compositions. This kind of "gallant" music now seems antiquated. Herr Henri Wieniawski delighted the public with a perfect rendering of Mendelssohn's violin concerto, supplementing Mendelssohn's cadenza with a very pretty one of his own. Of two of his



own compositions, "Legende" and "Polonaise," for violin with orchestral accompaniment, the first pleased us more particularly. It is a charming instrumental drawing-room piece for the violin.

The third Gewandhausconcert produced the new C major symphony by Ferdinand Hiller, under the composer's own direction. The graceful scherzo especially took our fancy. Next to it we like the first movement, which, through its artistic construction, will more particularly interest musicians. The slow movement has many charms, but as a whole is not effective. The finale seemed the weakest part. A concerto for violoncello by Heinrich Hofmann, and the romance from the cello concerto (Op. 32), by Albert Dietrich, played by the Dresden "Kammermusik," Friedrich Grützacher, were likewise new. The romance by Dietrich is praiseworthy; while the concerto by Hofmann belongs to that sort of light modern music which merely aims at effect, and of which the last-named composer has already produced a great quantity. Herr Grützacher's performance did not please us much this time. An excellent *colorature* singer, Frau Koch-Bossenberger, with a mellow, sympathetic, and very high soprano voice, sang Rosine's aria "Frag' ich mein beklommen Herz," from *Il Barbieri*, and three songs by Rubinstein, Taubert, and Jensen. The lady possesses extraordinary finish and certainty in the most difficult cadenzas. Of the latter, she, however, crammed rather too many into Rossini's aria. These embellishments showed not only the singer's virtuosity, but also a great want of taste. Mozart's overture to *Figaro* commenced, and Schumann's to *Genoëva* concluded the concert in a worthy manner.

The works of Mons. Camille Saint-Saëns, from Paris, attracted the greatest attention at the fourth Gewandhaus Concert. They consisted of his fourth pianoforte concerto (C minor), with orchestral accompaniment, and some pianoforte solos, Liszt's transcription of "The Danse Macabre," two short pieces by Rameau, and a transcription of a gavotte from a violin sonata by Bach. Saint-Saëns also conducted one of his own orchestral pieces, "Le rouet d'Omphale." The author calls this work a symphonic poem. We could not find anything symphonic in it, but here and there a pleasing and melodious ballet-air, the instrumentation of which shows great skill and taste. We were still less pleased by the pianoforte concerto. It consists of an introduction in the form of a variation, an andante, scherzo, intermezzo, and finale. Only the andante and the scherzo were interesting. The "Danse Macabre" seemed simply repulsive. Mons. Saint-Saëns certainly is an excellent musician, in possession of an artistic and highly-finished technique in composing. He appears well up in every style of music, and is constantly giving us proofs of his great skill. In his instrumentation he employs all modern means to produce piquant and striking effects. Spirited ideas are interwoven here and there; but, on the whole, his music does not attract us much. It seems throughout laboured, and always leaves us cold. We can only admire the skill of Mons. Saint-Saëns as a composer, but as a pianist he must be acknowledged to rank high. Frl. Philippine von Edelsberg was the singer of the evening, and her performances were Leonore's aria "Abscheulicher," from Beethoven's *Fidelio*, and two Italian canzonets: "La Nana," by Franco Faccio, and "Pur dicesti," by Lotti. Although she may still be called a fine singer, Frl. von Edelsberg has lost some of her former power and beauty of voice. The purest and greatest enjoyment afforded us was Schumann's E flat major symphony, with which the concert opened.

Herr Jean Becker's "Florentine" string quartet gave three concerts in the Gewandhausconcert-rooms. On the first two evenings were played quartets by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann. The players took some liberties with the music, for which we must hold them responsible. These little extravagances weakened the good impression which their performance produced. On the third evening they introduced the three prize quartets by Fr. Lux (Mayence), Aug. Bungert (Berlin), and Bernhard Scholz (Breslau). The piano quartet by Bungert alone enlisted sympathy, and also pleased us as being sound and harmonious music, with natural flow of invention. Of the string quartets, that by Scholz is the better of the two; whilst the composition by Lux, with the exception of a methodical construction, has hardly any other traits worth mentioning.

At the second "Euterpe" concert we heard a still very young (scarcely sixteen years old) violinist, Frl. Bertha Haft, from Vienna, who unquestionably possesses extraordinary powers. This young girl played a concerto movement by Paganini, an air by Bach, and a polonaise by Laub, with facility, elegance, and great volume of tone. She is thoroughly qualified to become an eminent violinist.

Herr Musikdirector Walter's Symphony Soirées commenced with the overture to *Ruy Blas*, by Mendelssohn, the second serenade, D major, by Jadassohn, and Beethoven's B flat major symphony. Between the orchestral pieces a very clever violinist, Herr Divorzak von Walden, came forward with an excellent performance of two movements of David's D minor concerto and smaller pieces for the violin.

At the Opera the Leipzig composer Franz von Holstein's latest work, *Die Hochländer* ("The Highlanders"), was produced as a novelty. The author of this four-act opera furnished music and text, both of which are excellent. The opera was extremely well received by a very numerous audience, who called for the author after each act.

At a concert organised by the Entrepreneur Hofmann we heard a young tenor, Herr Schott, whose fine voice and musical execution deserve great commendation. An equally excellent rendering was given by the young pianist, Frl. Clara Meller, from London, of Saint-Saëns's second pianoforte concerto (in G minor). The second movement of this work is a graceful piece—the best we have as yet heard of Saint-Saëns.

The favourite concert-singer, Frl. Thekla Friedländer, has made but a short stay at her native town. Engagements in Dresden, Magdeburg, and other places, where she sang with great success, made it impossible for her to accept further invitations here.

#### MUSIC IN VIENNA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

VIENNA, November 12th, 1877.

MUSICAL life in Vienna has suffered a very great loss, not easily to be repaired: Herbeck is dead—he, the man who for years has been so closely associated with the musical history of our town. From his entrance as conductor, the Männergesangverein, the Singverein, the concerts of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, the Hofkapelle, count a new life. He was incomparable in rehearsing works with choruses or for orchestra, and at performance he held the masses in his hand like a giant. He will never be forgotten; at least a whole generation must die before his name will cease to be mentioned on every occasion. Johann Herbeck, born in Vienna, December 25, 1831, was the son of a poor tailor. He had a fine voice, and entered the monastery of Heiligenkreuz, near Baden, to sing in the choir, but soon was taken back to Vienna to study the theory of music. For some months he was the pupil of L. Rotter, a clever musician; then went his way alone, to become his own preceptor. In 1852 he became *regens-chori* to one of the churches in a suburb; in 1856 he was elected Chormeister of the Männergesangverein; in 1858 he was for a short time professor in the Conservatoire; and in the same year conductor of the Singverein, then just founded; in 1859 he received the post of artistic director of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde; in 1863 he was appointed third, and in 1866 first, Hofkapellmeister. Now he gave up the conductorship of the Männergesangverein; and when he was, in 1869, elected Hofopernkapellmeister, he likewise abandoned the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde. In 1871 he held his highest post—director of the Imperial Opera. He remained till 1875, when he found it suitable to renounce that place, and to return to his former situation at the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde and its Singverein; and now, amidst the preparation for the coming musical season, after a short illness, he died on the 28th of October last, at the age of forty-six. The same illness—inflammation of the lungs—he vanquished twice; on the third time his lot was decided. He was by nature ambitious in the extreme. A gloomy might drove him from place to place. From the moment when he left his post as director of the Opera, he must have suffered much inwardly, though he did not let it appear. Under his direction many classical operas were given, and many reforms showed the

best intention; but his want of administrative ability in the management of such an institute was his ruin. By the programmes which he drew up for the Männergesangverein and the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, he always tried to display these societies in the best artistic light. For the former he himself composed many part-songs, which were received with more favour than his compositions for the orchestra or the chamber; for, in truth, he was but little endowed with natural gifts of invention. Sometimes he was happy in imitating Schubert, his darling and most favoured composer, and many of whose works he was the first to bring before the public. The last masterpiece he conducted was Mozart's *Requiem*. This will be performed next Thursday in his memory in the great concert-room of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde by their members, assisted by the Singverein, Orchesterverein, and the orchestra, chorus, and soloists of the Hofoper, the receipts being destined for a monument to his memory. His funeral showed how much he was esteemed and beloved in all circles. An immense phalanx of friends and artists, with all the members of the musical societies and of the theatres, followed the great conductor to his grave; and the general grief at his death found expression in choral hymns and orations. The question of his successor as conductor is not yet decided. In the meantime, director Hellmesberger will take his place for the next concerts.

The first concert of the Philharmonic Society took place yesterday, with the following programme:—Overture to *Genoveva*, by Schumann; a violin sonata, by Seb. Bach, arranged for orchestra by Hellmesberger; "Vorspiel und Liebestod," from *Tristan and Isolde*, by Wagner; and Beethoven's symphony in c minor. Hans Richter, the conductor, was received with great applause, which followed also every number, splendidly executed.

In the Hofoper has been given for the first time the ballet *Sylvia*, the music by Leo Delibes. The libretto of *Sylvia* is a mythological one and of little interest; but the music shows again the clever, ingenious composer, though, as a whole, his former ballet, *Coppelia*, pleased much more. Together with *Sylvia*, Cherubini's *Wasserträger* (Count Armand; or, *Les Deux Jours*) was performed. Herr Beck in the title-role (Mikeli) was incomparable. Wagner's *Rheingold* is in full preparation.

The Komische Opera will again be re-opened under its first director, Albin Swoboda. There will be, as introduction, a short Italian season by a society composed of the ladies Giuliani, Marzi, Cestarelli, and the Signori Fernando, La Rocca, Fagotti, Ulloa, and Scheggi. Signor Morini is the impresario, who begins with *Otello* next Wednesday.

Operas performed in the Hofoper from October 12th to November 12th:—*Landfriede* (twice, and, as it seems, for the last time), *Judin*, *Lohengrin*, *Arikanerin* (twice), *Troubadour*, *Walküre* (twice), *Tell*, *Das Goldene Kreuz*, *Robert der Teufel*, *Der häusliche Krieg*, *Mignon*, *Profit*, *Der Wasserträger* (four times), *Tannhäuser*, *Faust*, *Martha* (with the re-engaged Fräulein Gindele), *Norma*, *Hochzeit des Figaro*, *Dom Sebastian*, *Zauberflöte*; also Verdi's *Requiem* was once performed at Allerseelentag (All Souls' Day).

#### MUSIC IN PARIS.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

PARIS, October 29th, 1877.

It has been truly said that "music is a universal language, and that lovers of music are the true cosmopolitans." That music speaks to all hearts is proved by the thousands of people who flock to hear it, and who will endure patiently any inconvenience, or fatigue, in order to listen to strains which interpret so eloquently their inmost emotions. That musicians and lovers of the divine art are cosmopolitans is further proved by the fact that any music-loving waif feels himself instantly at home in any foreign clime, so soon as he finds himself in an atmosphere which would have been congenial to a Beethoven or a Mozart. One could not but be reminded of these things yesterday in attending the second concert of the season given by M. Pasdeloup. All Parisians are doubtless grateful to this *début*—if one may use the word in such a sense—who by his own enthusiasm for music provides so much delight for many. His

concerts are now given in the Cirque d'Hiver, Boulevard des Filles du Calvaire, instead of as formerly at the Cirque Napoléon. The Cirque d'Hiver is a small "Albert Hall," and is constructed to hold about 5,000 persons. The orchestra consists of about 100 members, and the *tout ensemble* of their performances is excellent. Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, included in yesterday's programme, was splendidly played and elicited warm applause; for the days are happily long past since a Parisian audience could be sceptical as to whether Beethoven's music were music at all. The second number on the programme was "Lénore," a ballade symphonie, by H. Duparc, which was heard for the first time in these concerts. A cynical remark was made near me, to the effect that the music was "neither better nor worse than the poem"—a point to be left to the lovers of Bürger's romantic and grotesque ballad and the admirers of the modern school of musical composition to decide. As music, it is certainly dramatic, appropriate, and intense, and so very Wagnerish as to leave a strong suspicion as to its possible author. Though differently conceived to the symphony on the same subject by Raff, it was generally well received. The third number on the programme—the "Symphonie fantastique" by Berlioz—is a true specimen of the modern school. The first movement, "Rêveries passions," is at one and the same time dreamy and intense; the second, "Le Bal," truly bewitching and fairy-like (in waltz tempo); the third, "Scène aux Champs," a weak imitation of the first movement of Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony—at least, so it seemed to me—the fourth, "Marche au Supplice," grand, measured, and terrible—a truly Gustave Doré scene; the fifth and last, well conceived, and splendidly worked out. At the end of this movement one hears the funeral-bell, the "Dies iræ," and the charming melody—the enchantress of the whole composition. One cannot better describe this work than by briefly translating the description of it given on the back of the programme.

"A young musician of painful sensibility and an ardent imagination poisons himself by means of opium in a fit of love grief. The narcotic dose which he inhaled was insufficient to deprive him of life; but it plunged him into a stupor, accompanied by strange visions, during which his sensations, sentiments, and remembrances are translated by his nervous brain into musical thoughts. Even the woman whom he loves becomes for him a melody and a fixed idea, which he hears always, and seeks everywhere; he recalls in his disease of soul his melancholy hours; his measureless joy on seeing his beloved; then his furious love; his delirious agonies; his desperate jealousy; then his return to tenderness; his religious consolations. He finds again his beloved at a ball and brilliant fête in the midst of tumult. On a summer evening in the country our hero hears two herdsmen entertaining each other in a kind of duet à la 'Ranz des Vaches.' This pastoral duet; the pleasant scene; the light rustling of the trees, softly moved by the wind; some hopes which have lately been born in his heart—all these things combine to produce in him an unusual calm, and to give a more congenial tone to his ideas. But she, the melody, appears anew; his heart congeals; sad presentiments again agitate him; if she should deceive him? One of the herdsmen again begins his naïve song; the other one fails to answer. The sun sets; distant thunder is heard; solitude and silence reign supreme. He dreams that he has killed his love; that he is condemned to death; conducted to torture. The funeral cortege advances to the sound of a march, gloomy and wild, brilliant and solemn, and in which a sound of muffled steps in succession is heard, in connection with the most frantic exclamations. At last his fixed idea reappears for a moment, as a *dernière pensée* of love, interrupted by a fatal crash. The Sabbath day dawns in the midst of a frightful troop of shadows, of sorcerers, of monsters of all kinds, to join his funeral procession; strange noises are heard; sighs—bursts of laughter—shrieks from the distance, answered by others. The beloved melody returns again; but it has lost its character of nobility and timidity, it is nothing more than a common dance-tune, trivial and grotesque. His love comes to the Sabbath festival; murmurs of joy at her arrival; she mingles with the diabolical orgies! the funeral-bell tolls; a burlesque parody of the 'Dies iræ' is heard: Ronde du Sabbat—Ronde du Sabbat and 'Dies iræ' together."

As a relief to this music of brain and nerves, a *largetto*, by Mozart, for clarinet and stringed instrument, Op. 108, was then performed. On the principle that "all that is spoke is marred," one finds this last a nobler, if a less brilliant composition than the one preceding it. It is in true Mozartian style. The clarinet solo was charmingly executed by M. Grisez, who won well-earned applause. This refined and elevating fragment was followed by Weber's overture to *Oberon*, with which the concert concluded.

The first "Concert du Châtelet" of the season was also given on the same day, under the direction of M. E. Colonne. The programme was as follows:—Mozart's overture to *The Magic Flute*; Berlioz's "Symphonie fantastique"; "Les Fêtes d'Hébé," a ballet, by Rameau (arranged for orchestra by J. B. Wekerlin; concerto in G minor, by M. C. Saint-Saëns (executed by Mme. Montigny-Rémaury); "Intermède d'Orphée," by Gluck (solo flute, M. Cantir); and Mendelssohn's Wedding March, from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. A grand mass was also performed in the Church of St. Augustin.

Well worthy of mention is a musical society which holds its réunions in the "Grand Orient of France." This society, formed originally for the study of the German language, now numbers amongst its members several hundreds of ardent students of both sexes, who also study English and several other subjects. It suffices for this notice to remark that the director of these *Cours*, Dr. L. Koch, himself a true lover of music, has conceived the idea of impressing upon his pupils the differences of rhythm and accent in various languages by means of song. To this end part-songs and Volkslieder, &c., are sung in their native tongues. At the last public réunion, which was also a prize distribution, Mendelssohn's part-song, "Oh, Forest deep and gloomy" ("Oh, Hills and Vales"), was sung in German, French, and English—a verse in each language. Also of the open-air part-songs, by Mendelssohn, "The Nightingale" was sung; Pinsuti's "Spring Song;" Curschmann's trio, "Protect us through the coming night," these in English and in German; "Kuhreihen," by F. Huber; and "Herzenswünsche"—Volkslied. This is an altogether charming and unique society.

## Reviews.

*The Life of Mozart.* Translated from the German Work of Dr. Ludwig Nohl, by Lady WALLACE. 2 vols. London: Longmans, Green, and Co.

THE appearance of these volumes at the present time is especially welcome. The only trustworthy life of Mozart which has hitherto appeared in English—that by Edward Holmes—is scarce—almost rare; and neither Bombet's treatise, taken from Schlichtegroll, or the contributions of Nissen, are available even for readers who can follow the original tongues in which those works are written. Dr. Nohl divides his work into two sections—*Apprenticeship* and *Mastership*—each forming a volume. In the first he tells us of the birth and life of the great genius, from 1756 to 1780—a term comprising a long state of dependence, and the longest portion of the days of his life. The second deals with the last ten years of his existence—from 1781 to 1791—the most productive, and certainly the most valuable from an artistic point of view. The story is told with a continuous series of reflections, not so much growing out of, as forming part and parcel of the whole plan. The remarks are supported and strengthened by copious quotations from letters written either by the father, the daughter, by interested friends, or by Wolfgang Mozart himself. We are thus, as it were, admitted to the confidence of the family, and to the secret life of the subject of the memoir. It is to be regretted that the information concerning his early years is comparatively scant, and difficult to reconcile with existing letters. For example, Dr. Nohl says, casually (page 32, vol. i.), that Wolfgang and Nannerl (his sister) had measles during the winter (1767). Leopold, the father, calls it small-pox, which it is much more likely to have been, judging from the record of the symptoms, for Wolfgang was blind from the effects for several days—nearly

a fortnight. Mozart's early sojourn in London is dismissed in some half-a-dozen lines. As this event had considerable influence over his future career, this silence, or rather reticence, is, at the least, somewhat disappointing. The childish nonsense in polyglot he was in the habit of writing to his sister and others of his dearest friends, is scarcely more than alluded to, as though Dr. Nohl considered such pleasantries—often the indication of true genius—to be derogatory to the character of a great musician. These are, of course, matters of small import, but they are especially interesting even to those who are willing to admit all the dignity of the great composer, but who wish also to know for certain, and are glad to find stated with authority, that his early years were like those of other clever children, and that, in addition to the musical genius he possessed, he also was capable of appreciating the humorous side of life. It is true this is dwelt upon in the story of his later years, but it might have been made more of, to show that "the child is the father of the man." There are also few new facts produced in the present book, but such as are related are told generally in an agreeable form. The seventh and eighth chapters, describing his acquaintance with the Weber family and the struggle with his father—probably the most critical period of his life, as they treat of his courtship and marriage—are written with considerable power and wisdom. Equally well set forth are the accounts of the operas, *Die Entführung*, the *Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Juan*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Die Zauberflöte*, each of which marks a distinct date and standpoint in the artistic history of Mozart.

The legend of the mysterious origin of the *Requiem* Mass is once more told, with the explanation as to who the singular messenger was. The sad description of his funeral—one of the most powerfully-written chapters in the two volumes—closes the work. The reader will be disappointed who expects to find elaborate critical analyses of Mozart's several productions; but he will be satisfied if he seeks fairly-written and carefully-prepared statements only of the various incidents in the life of one of the greatest musicians of his own or of any period—"a man whose footprints not all the storms of time can ever efface—a man who, amid all his lofty aims, esteemed the loftiest of all to be the elevation of humanity." It was probably in pursuance of this last-named desire that Mozart, although a member of the Roman Catholic Church, was an ardent Freemason, working with that love and harmony which form one of the characteristic qualities of the fraternity. Here, by the way, it may be stated, that Dr. Nohl entirely mistakes the principles of the body when he states that the Masonic order "specially attacked the abuses in the Church." Neither at that time nor at the present is it lawful for a Mason to do other than to abstain from all practices which may have a tendency to subvert the peace and good order of society, and that, moreover, it is expressly forbidden by the rules of the craft that the brethren should take part in religious or political controversies. In other respects, Dr. Nohl's book may be considered as supplying a much-felt want at the present time, and for that reason should command a considerable degree of attention.

The translation, as a whole, appears to have been fairly and conscientiously done, and Lady Wallace has once more earned the gratitude of English readers by placing before them a subject of much particular interest. There are one or two little peculiarities which might be altered in subsequent editions. Thus, in England we say the keys E major or F minor, and not E sharp and F flat. We would also rather have seen the term *streich-quartett* translated "quartett for strings or stringed instruments," than "stringed quartett." These, however, may well be considered as of small importance in an otherwise generally good book.

The value of the volumes would have been increased had there been a systematic catalogue of Mozart's works arranged according to publication or production. The composer's own list might have been made the basis, and the discoveries of the many earnest Mozart students, which are not difficult of access, would have supplied the rest.

In spite of its shortcomings, the work will be received with pleasure, and will supply a good place in musical literature for a considerable time to come.



*Studies and Preludes for the Pianoforte.* By XAVER SCHARWENKA. Op. 27. London: Augener & Co.

*Etüden für Pianoforte.* Von CARL BAERMANN, Jun. Op. 4, Heft I. Offenbach a/M: Joh. André.

*Etüden für Pianoforte.* Von ALOYS SCHMIDT. Op. 114C, Heft I. Offenbach a/M: Joh. André.

It is a happy thing, both for musical students and publishers, that we have outlived the time when pianoforte "Studies," written solely with the view of attaining technical proficiency, were regarded as fulfilling all necessary requirements. Since the time that J. B. Cramer succeeded in introducing into his "Studies" what might almost be called a *philanthropic* principle—as Herr Pauer, in the Preface to his edition of Chopin's "Studies," has aptly expressed it—composers have vied with each other in their attempts to infuse a more genial and expressive character into pieces at the same time designed to improve technical execution. And thus it has come to pass that so-called "Studies" are no longer regarded with horror and suspicion, as things to be avoided by all but professional pupils; and publishers are no longer afraid to publish pieces suitable for drawing-room or concert use under the title of "Etüden." To this class of composition belong the "Studies and Preludes" of Xaver Scharwenka and the set of six "Etüden," which we have now before us, by Carl Baermann.

It is difficult to draw any close distinction between "Studies" and "Preludes." From a feeling on the part of publishers and composers that no composition should be sent out into the world without a baptismal name, both terms have been used, often almost synonymously, in modern musical parlance, simply as distinguishing titles for short movements which could not conveniently be classed under others of a more poetical and attractive character. It matters little, therefore, that of these six pieces by Herr Scharwenka, three are entitled "Preludes" and three "Studies," except so far as a speciality attaches to each of the latter from the fact that over and above their worth and attractiveness from a purely musical point of view, one is admirably designed for affording the student excellent practice in staccato playing, another in arpeggios—not running wildly, *à la Thalberg*, all over the keyboard, but spread-out chords—the third and last being a more brilliant and extended piece for concert use. The "Preludes," though they are not confined to the exposition and development of a single figure and idea, might with equal propriety have been entitled "Studies." As such, they will be found musically interesting, useful, and agreeable. No. 1, within a short space, affords a great variety in the practice of vigorous moving passages (*non legato*), broken chords, both in close and extended positions, scales in sixths and octaves combined, and, at the same time, is well calculated to impart prominence and independence to the left hand. No. 2 is very Chopinesque, and might fairly have been put forth as a nocturne or a romance. It is, in fact, a charmingly plaintive song without words for a tenor voice, accompanied by a smoothly-flowing figure of triplets in two-part harmony above, and by sustained chords in the bass below, and followed by a somewhat extended coda or ritornella, in which the opening phrase of the song is now for the first time heard in the upper part and re-echoed in the bass, the triplet-figure of the accompaniment being still maintained in one part or the other. The remaining Prelude—a kind of scherzo in E flat minor, *assai allegro, quasi presto*—is the freshest and most vigorous of them all. A combination of faculties, viz., a pliant wrist for the execution of rapid staccato chords, a close touch for legato and arpeggio passages, accurate phrasing, and a thorough independence of both hands, is absolutely necessary for its due interpretation. The employment of a mixed rhythm (five crotchets to the bar) is a pleasing and unusual feature of its middle section.

The six "Etüden" by Carl Baermann, Jun., presumably a son of the famous clarinetist, H. J. Baermann, and a pupil of Liszt's, both in spirit and in their mode of treatment are more nearly allied to the Mendelssohnian than to the Chopin-Liszt school of thought, but are by no means wanting in romantic and poetical feeling. Fulfilling the conditions of "Studies," they are also admirable as musical pieces, and, on account of their general tunefulness, vigorous harmonisation, and often interesting figuration, will be found both improving and attractive by well-practised

players. Though lying well for the keyboard, they are by no means easy to execute well, and would probably figure in a publisher's catalogue as "difficult," or at least as "moderately difficult."

The set of "Etüden" by Aloys Schmidt (1789—1866), which forms but part of a section of a new edition of a comprehensive "Method" of pianoforte playing, consists of a selection of five-finger exercises of the ordinary type, followed by thirty-two short and easy "Studies" of a pleasing character, which might have been specially designed as exercises to be practised preparatory to attacking Mozart's easier sonatas, so admirably do they seem to us to be fitted for such a purpose.

*Country Life.* A Cantata. The words selected from the Old Poets. The Music composed by EDWARD F. RIMBAULT, LL.D. London: J. Curwen and Sons, 8, Warwick Lane, E.C.

THE endeavour to concentrate into an interesting form the general characteristics of English melody would appear to be a praiseworthy one. For this reason the cantata *Country Life* will make for itself a welcome. The general subject embraces a period of time extending from May-day to Harvest-home. The greater part of the work is given to a chorus, and as such will be a boon to choral societies who desire to add to their stores of tuneful and easy music not altogether ineffective. There are melodious solos for soprano, tenor, and bass voices, none of which are out of the compass of ordinary voices. The pianoforte part is interesting, but would require a little more skill on the part of the executant than that needed of the vocal performers. As a composition, *Country Life* does not appeal to the higher musical sympathies—there is nothing in it to show that the author had any views in art beyond those confined within the narrow boundaries of the "tonic and dominant" in harmony, or the comely, yet homely, forms of the popular ditty or dance tune. There are many who will receive it the more heartily and gladly, probably, for those very qualities. As there does not appear to be any great design or ambitious intention, it must not be judged according to a high standard. If it was simply written to please, it will fulfil that design, and that will prove as good as the best.

*The Organist's Quarterly Journal.* Part 36, Vol. V. Novello & Co.

It is with no little regret that we are again obliged to comment upon the worthless nature of a large proportion of the music which finds its way into the pages of Dr. Spark's periodical. The October number contains no less than six compositions, covering twenty closely-engraved pages, and yet we are at a loss to point out anything which we can regard as a really valuable contribution to our store of organ-music.

An *Andante espressivo*, by James Stimpson, is based upon themes which, to say the least, are trite, and the movement is not effective in proportion to the difficulties attending its execution. The so-called "Allemande," by Frederic Archer, is certainly not the best production which we have seen of the clever organist to the Alexandra Palace Company; and an *Andante*, by Dr. J. V. Roberts, which has at any rate the merit of being unpretentious, is nevertheless marred by a want of balance in some of its rhythmical sections. The remaining three pieces serve as "padding," and they do little else.

We do not wish to under-estimate the difficulties which surround Dr. Spark's enterprise, but we cannot help thinking that the pursuit of a more liberal policy, and the fixed determination to accept no contributions from untried composers (excepting in rare cases of striking merit), would not only better enable the editor to maintain the excellent character which some of the earlier numbers have earned for his work, but would also tend to swell the list of subscribers.

*Andante* (in A) for the Organ. By S. S. WESLEY. Novello & Co.

THIS posthumous work should be welcome to every organist whose taste for pure organ music is not vitiated by the modern fashion of playing trashy "arrangements." The movement is one of considerable development, and of symphonic proportions.

The music is somewhat suggestive of Beethoven, and yet it has a distinct individuality of style which all who were familiar with the late Dr. Wesley's fine extempore playing will not fail to recognise and appreciate.

*Sonata for the Organ* (in c minor). By ROBERT HAINWORTH. Weekes & Co.

A FOOT-NOTE upon the title-page informs us that "to this sonata the prize offered by the College of Organists for an original organ composition was awarded in 1876." We are disposed to think, therefore, that the general level of the compositions submitted to the umpires on that occasion was not above mediocrity. It would be manifestly unfair to assert that the work before us is without merit, and yet we cannot say much in its favour. The themes are not as a rule happy, and the development is sometimes of the feeblest description. The *larghetto* is perhaps the best portion of the work, and this movement may be made useful as a voluntary; with this exception, however, the music will probably not find many expositors.

1. *Andante du Troisième Quintuor en Ut-mineur de W. A. MOZART. Transcrit pour Violon, avec Accompagnement de Piano*, par G. HADDOCK.
2. *Celebrated Menuet* by L. BOCCHERINI. Transcribed for Violin, with Accompaniment for Piano, by G. HADDOCK. London: Schott & Co.

COMPARATIVELY easy arrangements of favourite works for such a combination as the violin and piano are plentiful enough, but the drawback usually connected with the majority of such works is their generally uninteresting character, except to those immediately concerned. This is not the case with these two pieces. Regarded in a musical light, they are exceedingly well done; and violin amateurs will welcome with "eager pleasure" the very useful yet not obtrusive directions for bowing and phrasing, which the arranger has wisely thought fit to mark upon his share of the work.

*The Brook's Lullaby*, Study for the Pianoforte; and *Sylvana* (Menuet d'Exaudet), pour Piano. Par MAURICE LEE. London: Augener & Co.

BOTH these pieces are designed with a rare felicity to suit the requirements of the drawing-room. The first-named is something more than a mere study. Not only will it be found useful as an exercise for the practice of melody-touch and accompaniment-touch in combination and for both hands, but will also win admiration as an attractive, pleasing, and elegant piece. Though the introduction—itsself also an admirable study for the practice of raising the hands at the close of each phrase—hardly hints at what is to follow, on turning over the first page there can be no question as to the composer's intentions. It is the rippling of a stream, together with the ideal song which it accompanies, that he has tried to depict. We may add that he has succeeded admirably in producing a charming little tone-picture.

"*Sylvana*"—an elegant piece introducing a menuet by Exaudet—has a very simple and taking melody, and may confidently be recommended to players as both improving and pleasing. Whether for the sake of the old tune here revived, and which was once a great favourite in France, or on account of the pleasing character of the new matter with which it is accompanied, "*Sylvana*" bids fair to take its stand by the side of Mr. Maurice Lee's well-known transcription of the famous Gavotte de Louis XV.

## Correspondence.

ADOLPHE NOURRIT.

To the Editor of the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD.

SIR,—I have followed with much interest the discussion on the late Adolphe Nourrit, which has appeared in recent numbers of

the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD; and as my remembrance of Mons. Nourrit is a personal one, slight though it be, I offer it to you.

As a child I was visiting at the house of a lady, the niece of Rogers the poet, who drew round her many cultivated people, literary and artistic. Looking back upon this galaxy of talent, the strong light of memory still falls on Nourrit. His lively manner, the *verve* and *élan* with which he sang, his French energy and German feeling, his general intelligence, and his *bonhomie*, all combined to make him remarkable and memorable. But no one could be in company with Nourrit without feeling that some circumstance had destroyed his mental balance, and it is possible that I heard him relate to our hostess the cause of this. At the time of the French Revolution of 1830, Nourrit was at his zenith, and was the tenor singer of Paris. The mob burst into his house and took him prisoner in order that he might sing the "Marseillaise;" and day and night one portion of the revolutionists or another dragged him to theatres or other public rooms. Many horrid sights met his view; he sang and sang until his voice and powers failed, and although years had passed at the time he recounted these facts, he said he never should recover the effect which they had had upon him. And who knows but that the bitter end of his life may in some degree be attributable to what I have recounted, inasmuch as his temperament was one of no ordinary susceptibility?

M. A. W.

Easebourne, near Midhurst, Sussex.  
November 17th, 1877.

## ROMMEL, RÜMMEL, OR RUMMEL

To the Editor of the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD.

SIR,—Your correspondent A. H. W. is in error in stating that Edouard Rommel is a pupil of Louis Brassin, of the Conservatoire de Bruxelles. The talented pupil of Mons. Brassin is *not* Rommel but Rummel; not Edouard, but Franz; not a Belgian, but a German born in London.—Yours, &c.,  
EDGBASTON, BIRMINGHAM.

November, 1877.  
[Franz Rummel, not Rummel?—ED. M.M.R.]

## Concerts, &c.

### CRYSTAL PALACE.

MR. E. DANNREUTHER, to whose executive skill, musical research, perceptivity, and persistence in constantly adding to his repertory, we have been indebted for so many first-hearings of so many pianoforte concertos of the highest interest (including those by Liszt, Grieg, and Tchaikowsky), came forward at the fourth concert, for the first time in England, with Xaver Scharwenka's concerto, for pianoforte and orchestra, in B flat minor (Op. 32). In the notice contributed by Mr. Dannreuther to the programme-book, the work is described as consisting of three movements:—1. An allegro, in sonata form, encircling a short adagio that serves as a kind of intermezzo. 2. A scherzo, in rondo form, with coda. 3. A finale, also in sonata form, in which the themes of the first movement, both allegro and adagio, are recapitulated and enlarged upon, and much new matter is introduced; so that, contrary to the almost universal practice of making the closing movement of a lighter character than the rest, in this instance the finale has become the weightiest. Mr. Dannreuther surmises that Herr Scharwenka composed the finale first, intending it for the principal movement; and that, finding it impossible to set forth all his material in one jet, he subsequently wrote the introductory allegro, with its intermezzo. But from the fact that the work contains no slow movement proper, beyond that incidentally introduced in the opening allegro, it seems equally open to conjecture that he wrote this first, intending to complete it as a short concert-piece, which the addition of a coda would make it, but was led on to supplement it with a scherzo and finale. Be this as it may, as Mr. Dannreuther remarks, he has undoubtedly succeeded in welding the entire mass of matter into a consistent whole, the interest of which increases as it proceeds. Broadly stated, this concerto of Herr Scharwenka's is Chopinesque in style. At the same time, it betokens a wide and intimate acquaintance on the part of its author with the best modern literature of the pianoforte, for the influence also of Schumann, Liszt, Henselt, Grieg, and Tchaikowsky is easily traceable. For this reason it cannot be said that Herr Scharwenka has yet attained to absolute individuality of style. Nor, considering his youth, was this to be expected; but so marked is the advance in this concerto over those of his previous essays with which we are acquainted, so evident is his constructive

ability, and so unquestionably is he endowed with inventive power, as is especially displayed by the novel and ingenious character of his "passage" writing, that he seems to be on the high road towards this end. Though less profound and less individualised than either of the concertos by Grieg or Tschaiakowsky, the eminently skilful and practical manner in which it is laid out, both for the pianoforte and the orchestra, its generally pleasing and attractive character, and the brilliancy of its effect, when adequately performed, combine in rendering it well worthy of the attention of practised concert players. On the present occasion of its performance the fullest justice was done to it by Mr. Dannreuther, to whom the task of overcoming the difficulties it presents had evidently been one of love and pleasure, as well as by the members of the band under Mr. Manns' skilful guidance. That it was thoroughly appreciated by the audience was made fully apparent by the loud and repeated applause which it evoked. The symphony was Mozart's "Hafner" (in D), so called from its having been composed (in 1782) to the order of one Hafner, of Salzburg, for the celebration of his daughter's wedding. A good old custom, that of commissioning composers to supply music for weddings and other festivities, and one which it is to be regretted is not imitated by the aristocracy and merchant-princes of our own day! Originally written as a serenade in six movements for a small band, it was subsequently reduced by Mozart to the usual proportions of a symphony for performance at one of his concerts, when parts for flutes and clarinets are said to have been added, but to have been lost. On account of its spontaneity, its compactness of form, its vigorous and tuneful character, and the independence of the wind-parts, it has so long been regarded by Mozart's admirers as among the best of his symphonic works, that the only surprise is that it should not have been made more generally familiar. The overtures were Rossini's *Siege of Corinth* and Schumann's *Manfred*. One could not listen to the latter without being inspired with a wish to hear the entire music which Schumann composed to Byron's dramatic poem, or, if that does not come within the means at Mr. Manns' disposal, at least so much of it as was brought forward at his benefit concert in 1874, and which has not since been repeated. Miss Robertson and Sig. Gustave Garcia were the vocalists. By her admirable delivery of Persiani's variations on Paisiello's aria, "Nel cor piu," Miss Robertson gave undeniable proof of her high attainments as a vocalist of the florid school; and, by her refined and ladylike rendering of "When the elves at dawn do pass," from Wallace's opera, *The Amber Witch*, proved her ability to divest an essentially commonplace song of much of its inherent vulgarity. For her fulfilment of both these tasks she was loudly applauded. Sig. Garcia displayed good taste and good style both in his choice and mode of rendering the recitative and air "Tyrannic Love," from Handel's *Susanna*, and a couple of songs by Schubert and Beethoven.

The fifth concert falling on the eve of the anniversary of Mendelssohn's death (Nov. 4, 1847), the greater part of the programme was devoted to works by this master. The selection included the overture to *St. Paul*; the air "Jerusalem," from the same oratorio, pleasingly rendered by Miss Mary Davies; and the *Hymn of Praise*, or, as it was originally entitled, *Lobgesang, eine Symphonie-cantata, nach Worten der heiligen Schrift*. Next to the *Elijah*, the *Hymn of Praise* has long been the most popular of Mendelssohn's sacred works in England, and for this reason, we think, might advantageously be put aside for a year or two, to be brought out again with renewed freshness and additional effect. Every member of both band and chorus probably knows his part by heart—a fact which, unfortunately, but too often engenders a tendency to hurry. Thus, splendid as was its general execution, we could not but feel that more than one movement would have gained in dignity by being taken at a somewhat more moderate pace. The principal vocal parts were entrusted to Miss Robertson, Miss Mary Davies, and Mr. Barton McGuckin, who acquitted themselves creditably. But it is not in music of this school that Miss Robertson is most at home; nor could we commend her for following Mme. Nilsson's example (in the highly dramatic "Watchman" scene) of delivering the Watchman's reply, "The night is departing," *mezzo voce*, for the sake of introducing a *crescendo* on the high A. The only novelty brought forward at this concert, and for which the place of honour in the programme was reserved, was a new concerto for violin and orchestra, in D minor (MS.), composed by Herr Max Bruch. Being somewhat Mendelssohnian in character, it seemed by no means out of place in the midst of a Mendelssohn selection. In point of form it is somewhat free. Instead of the usual allegro, it commences with a well-developed adagio in sonata form (D minor and major), followed by a recitative in B flat, and a finale (in D major) in rondo form, the recitative, which links its two principal movements together, being both of a retrospective and prospective character, inasmuch as some of the motives of the first movement are reintroduced in it, and the principal subjects of the finale are foreshadowed. In other respects it bears no strongly marked indi-

viduality of style, either as regards the material employed or the method of employing it, except as concerns the fullness with which the *tutti* in the first movement are scored (with trombones, &c.),—a mode of procedure which we could not think advantageous to such a work, because it tends to destroy the balance between the *solis* and the *tutti*. It served admirably, however, as a vehicle of display for Señor Sarasate, for whom it was expressly composed, and by whom it was now executed with remarkable skill, for the first time in public, and under the direction of its composer. That it pleased the audience greatly there could be no doubt, for both composer and executant were twice called forward.

The sixth concert commenced with the overture to Professor Macfarren's oratorio *Joseph*, composed for the late Leeds Musical Festival, and which is announced for performance (for the first time in London) by the Royal Albert Choral Society on the 11th inst. The overture to *Joseph* is classical in form, and pastoral in spirit. According to the programme-book, the characteristics happily seized by Professor Macfarren are Pharaoh's dreams of fat and lean kine feeding in the meadow; of rank and thin ears tossing before the east wind; and the culmination of Joseph's prosperity as we see him moving among the granaries of his own creation; but that such is its drift could hardly have been apparent to those who had not already familiarised themselves with the oratorio itself, subjects from which are made to do duty in the overture, and which necessarily lose much of their force when separated from the context. Mlle. Anna Mehlig was the pianist. She came forward with Hummel's concerto in B minor, which, on this the first occasion of its being heard at these concerts, she executed with great readiness and brilliancy. That it contains more finger-play than feeling none will deny. For this reason, and on account of its lack of original thought, it cannot be ranked very high as a composition. Still, recalling Mlle. Mehlig's playing here last season of Henselt's and Hiller's concertos, we cannot blame her for her choice on the present occasion; for it is certainly well that opportunities of listening to old-fashioned works should from time to time be accorded, if only as being historically instructive, and as tending to place in a stronger light the advance which later composers have made both in the choice of their material and its treatment. The remaining instrumental pieces were Beethoven's symphony in B flat, No. 4, and the ballet music from Gounod's latest opera, *Cinq Mars*, which, pretty and sparkling as it is, is too much of a piece with much that M. Gounod, too prone to repeat himself, has already often treated us to in previous works. The vocal music was contributed by Mme. Lemmens-Sherrington and Miss Laing Meason. Mme. Lemmens-Sherrington, who, it should be remembered, was the first to make known in England the famous "Jewel" song from *Faust*, long before the opera was played here, now came forward (for the first time at these concerts, if not indeed also for the first time in England) with the cavatina "Nuit resplendissante," from *Cinq Mars*. Like "Salve dimora," in *Faust*, of which it is a kind of *replica*, it will probably be accepted as the gem of M. Gounod's new opera. She was further heard in a song by the Chevalier Lemmens, the burden of which was, "I took the wren's nest; Heaven forgive me!" and into which it seemed to be her aim to infuse as much tragic feeling as if she were lamenting the murder of one of her own children. Miss Meason, a *débutante*, by her singing of a couple of songs by Rossi and Costa, gave proof of the possession of a mellow contralto voice which, with increased confidence and further experience, ought to stand her in good stead.

The seventh concert opened with the Festival Overture, composed by C. Villiers Stanford, organist of Trinity College, Cambridge, and conductor of the Cambridge University Musical Society, for the late Gloucester Musical Festival. True to its title, it is bright and festive, but at the same time earnest in its tone; and being clear in design, and fully and effectively scored for the orchestra, fairly calls for commendation as a scholarly work, which bodes well for its author's future as a composer. As a classical pianist, Miss Emma Barnett won both credit and applause by her neat execution of Beethoven's concerto in C minor, No. 3, in the first movement of which she introduced a well-written and appropriate *cadenza* by her brother, Mr. J. Francis Barnett. The symphony was Schumann's in E flat ("Rhenish"), No. 3, to hear which, as Mr. Manns alone of the conductors in or near London has succeeded in presenting it, is always a genuine and not too often accorded treat. The vocalists were Mme. Osgood and Mr. Vernon Rigby. Mme. Osgood was happy in her choice of the aria, "Flowers of the Valley," from Weber's *Euryanthe*, and the scena, "Isolde's Death," from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, in which, especially in the latter, in spite of the over-loudness of the accompaniment, which was doubtless designed to be played in a sunken orchestra, she gave the fullest evidence of her strong dramatic powers. Mr. Vernon Rigby made choice of the air, "Refrain thy voice," from Dr. Sullivan's oratorio, *The Light of the World*, and of a couple of songs by Schubert and Schumann. There was still to be heard the ballet



music from Rossini's *Mosè in Egitto*; but who after listening to the divine strains of Beethoven, Schumann, and Wagner, could endure the incongruity of their being immediately followed by Rossini's trivial dance tunes?

#### ALEXANDRA PALACE.

Music is still represented in its more exalted aspect at this popular place of amusement, despite the changes in the musical staff which have been recently effected. A series of Saturday Concerts, to take place fortnightly, has been projected, two performances having been given up to the time of our going to press. The first, which took place on November 3rd, was sufficiently near the anniversary of the death of Mendelssohn (November 4th) to give reason to the design of forming a programme out of certain of the vocal and instrumental works of the great composer, as a commemoration of his life and labours. An excellent band of about fifty performers and a numerous chorus at the disposal of the conductor, Mr. Frederic Archer, enabled him to present a programme of some interest; and with the hearty co-operation of all concerned, including Mme. Patey and Mr. J. H. Pearson as chief vocalists, the performance was altogether most creditable.

The orchestral pieces given were the overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, lightly and delicately played as befitted its character; the "Italian" symphony—fairly well done as a whole, but lacking in precision and expression in one or two places—defects which a short time back would scarcely have been observed either by critics or audience; but the advance of knowledge in matters musical brings with it a more fastidious taste. The choir performed, as their share of the Mendelssohn Commemoration; the choruses from the unfinished oratorio *Christus*, with some rhythmic emphasis and much spirit. Mr. Pearson sang "The Garland;" and Mme. Patey, "O rest in the Lord," each in an acceptable style.

These same vocalists were heard in the second part, miscellaneous in character, though neither of the songs they sang were remarkable specimens of music; Mme. Patey presenting to her audience a dismal ditty, by C. Anderton, entitled "What is To-morrow?" and Mr. Pearson sang "Eily Mavourneen," by Benedict. The overture to *Oberon*, the march in *Le Prophète*, the chorus "Trumpet, blow," from Gounod's *Reine de Saba*, with a duo concertante for pianoforte and flute, admirably played by Messrs. Archer and John Radcliffe, made a programme of variety and interest.

The second concert, given on the 17th inst., included Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, in which Miss José Sherrington, Miss Marion Severn, Mr. Pearson, and Mr. Wadmore were the vocalists. The performance was made especially memorable by the effect created by Miss Sherrington in the "Inflammatus." She introduced a high shake at the conclusion, an effect as brilliant as it was startling. Of course Rossini's music could not suffer by this interpolation, and the singer covered herself with honour by the novelty and daring of the attempt. Miss Marion Severn sang correctly as usual; Mr. Pearson did the best he could with the tenor music, but Mr. Wadmore's voice was too light for the bass part, and notwithstanding his excellent singing he made no effect whatever. He was more at his ease in the scene from *Zampa*, by Hérold, which he sang in the second part. The best example of vocalisation was shown by Miss Sherrington in the "Shadow Song" from *Dinorah*, and this was most thoroughly enjoyed by the audience, as likewise was the admirable performance on the pianoforte of Signor Tito Mattei in his own composition for that instrument and the orchestra, called a "Preludio e Tempo di Valzer." The title of the work sufficiently indicates its general character; the details, as far as could be judged by the performance, are well wrought out and displayed in a true musicianly style, but the effective presentation of the work needs skill and manipulative power at all events equal with that displayed by the composer on this occasion. If the "Preludio" has a fault it is that the instrumental colouring has been laid on with too liberal a hand; the consequence is that the accompaniments appear to be too noisy. It was however, thanks to the performance, well received, as were also the two overtures, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and Weber's *Fidel*, both of which, like the rest of the programme, Mr. F. Archer conducted with care and earnestness.

#### MONDAY AND SATURDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

The twentieth season of these excellent concerts, which, since their institution under the direction of Mr. S. Arthur Chappell, in 1859, have tended to diffuse, as well as to conserve, a taste for classical chamber-music to an extent, and in a manner not previously attempted, commenced auspiciously on the evening of the 12th ult. The programme opened with Schumann's string quartet in a minor (Op. 41, No. 1), which, played here now for the eleventh time,

may fairly be regarded as an established favourite. Requiring specially tender handling for its due presentation, it seems eminently suited to the genius of Mme. Norman-Néruda, by whom, with MM. L. Ries, Zerbini, and Piatti for her coadjutors, it was skillfully and effectively led. Mme. Anna Mehlig, whose praises as an executant of high artistic attainments and feeling we have so often felt a pleasure in singing, was the pianist of the evening. For her solo she made choice of Beethoven's difficult variations on a theme in E flat (Op. 35), from the ballet of *Prometheus* (*Die Geißel des Prometheus*)—a theme which was subsequently employed by him in the finale of the "Eroica" symphony. She was further heard, with Mme. Norman-Néruda and Sig. Piatti, in Mendelssohn's well-known trio in C minor, Op. 66. The vocal music comprised four duets, by Mendelssohn and Rubinstein, pleasingly and artistically rendered (to Sir Julius Benedict's accompaniment) by Mmes. Friedlaender and Redeker. The concluding string quartet was Haydn's in B flat (Op. 55, No. 3).

Mme. Anna Mehlig was again the pianist on the following Monday evening, when she came forward with Liszt's famous transcription for pianoforte of Bach's grand fantasia and fugue in G minor for organ. Heard now for the first time at these concerts, and executed with immense power and effect, it secured for her a double recall, in response to which she gave in addition the rigaudon from Raff's pianoforte Suite in B flat, Op. 204. In company with Mme. Norman-Néruda, MM. Zerbini and Piatti, she further did excellent service in J. Rheinberger's fine quartet in E flat (Op. 38). This (as well as Rubinstein's trio in B flat, included in the programme of the previous Saturday) is one of those works for the introduction of which, with many others, we have to thank Dr. von Bülow, who, during his stay here in 1874, gave an impetus to these concerts for which we cannot be too thankful, but which no other of the artists who have succeeded him has been found to continue. It is a work, too, which has so forcibly kept its ground, both here and elsewhere, that one cannot but feel surprised that it has not led to other of Herr Rheinberger's compositions being brought to a hearing. Sig. Piatti, accompanied on the pianoforte by Mr. Zerbini, was heard in a couple of romances, composed for violin or violoncello, by the late B. Molique—pleasing as drawing-room pieces, but wholly unworthy of Sig. Piatti's great powers as an executant. The string quartet was that by Mozart, in B flat, generally known as "No. 9," but really the last but one of the twenty-seven he composed. Mme. Antoinette Sterling was happier in her choice of three thoroughly beautiful songs by Schubert ("Letzte Hoffnung"), Grieg ("Beim Sonnenuntergang"), and Franz ("Ihr Auge") than that of Dr. Sullivan's dreary setting of some ghastly lines by the late Adelaide A. Procter, addressed to a starving child. She was nevertheless loudly applauded; indeed, throughout the evening the audience, less numerous than usual, perhaps on account of the inclemency of the weather, was more than usually demonstrative.

To the long list of lady pianists already announced to appear in the course of the season, we have now to add the name of Miss Dora Schirmacher, of Liverpool. Herr Ignaz Brüll, more widely known in Germany as the composer of the successful comic opera *Das goldene Kreuz* than as a pianist, and the famous violinist, M. Wieniawski, have also accepted engagements.

#### HERR HERMANN FRANK'S CHAMBER-MUSIC CONCERTS.

DURING the last year or two Herr Franke has been the means of bringing to the fore a vast number of compositions of interest and importance by living writers. In the course of a series of four concerts, given during the last month at the Royal Academy of Music, under the auspices of an influential committee, consisting of the Earl of Aberdeen, the Hon. Norman Grosvenor, Messrs. G. A. Balfour, M.P., R. H. Benson, C. Hubert, H. Parry, C. Villiers Stanford, and H. Franke, the following new and unfamiliar works, in addition to others better known, have been announced for performance, viz.:—Raff's sonata chromatische in G minor, for pianoforte and violin (Op. 129); H. Hofmann's sextet in E minor, for strings (Op. 25); C. V. Stanford's sonata (MS.), for pianoforte and violin; Professor G. A. Macfarren's string quartet in F major (Op. 54); and J. Röntgen's "Toskanische Rispetti" (Op. 9), for solo, voices, and pianoforte. Among the artists engaged by Herr Franke there have been Mmes. Anna Mehlig, Haas, Löwe, Friedlaender, and Redeker, and MM. Peiniger, Hollander, Lasserre, Norman, Frantzen, Stanford, Samson, McGuckin, Shakespeare, and Pyatt.

#### MR. WALTER BACHE'S PIANOFORTE RECITAL.

THE programme of Mr. Bache's sixth annual recital, which took place at St. James's Hall on the afternoon of the 5th ult., in the presence of a numerous and appreciative audience, though it included no absolute

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novelty, was one of the highest excellence, and full of interest. The instrumental portion comprised Beethoven's Thirty-two Variations in C minor, and the sonata in E major (Op. 109); a selection from the works of Chopin, viz., six of the preludes (Op. 28), the polonaise in C minor (Op. 40, No. 2), and four mazurkas (Op. 41); four pieces by Liszt, viz., "Au bord d'une source," "Pastorale," "Canzona Napolitana," and First Ballad (D flat); and Bach's fantasia cromatica and fuga in D minor. In all these works, which he executed from memory, Mr. Bache again undeniably asserted his claims as a player of extraordinary power and sensibility. In the vocal department he had the valuable assistance of Mr. Santley, whose perfect rendering in German (to Mr. Zerbini's accompaniment on the piano) of three remarkably charming songs by Liszt—"Es muss ein Wunderbares sein," "Du bist wie eine Blume," and "In Liebeslust," Schubert's "An die Leyer," and Schumann's "Frühlingsnacht" was a real artistic treat.

THE first subscription concert for the present season of the Borough of Hackney Choral Association took place at the Town Hall, Shoreditch, on Monday evening, the 12th ult. The programme included Mendelssohn's setting of the Thirteenth Psalm for alto solo, chorus, and orchestra; Mr. E. Prout's *Magnificat* (Op. 7); a selection of six numbers from Weber's *Oberon*; and the overture to *Guillaume Tell*. The soloists were Miss Catharine Penna, Miss Annie Butterworth, and Mr. Henry Guy. The band and chorus, conducted by Mr. Ebenezer Prout, numbered nearly 200 performers.

THE Saturday evening "North Kensington Musical Evenings" (for gentlemen), instituted last year at Ladbroke Hall, were resumed on the 10th ult. For the second season, the London Vocal Union (under the direction of Mr. Fred Walker) has again been engaged for the part-music, which will be varied occasionally, as hitherto, with vocal and instrumental solos.

### Musical Notes.

"HEZEKIAH," a sacred cantata, for solo voices, chorus, and orchestra, composed by Dr. Armes, organist of Durham Cathedral, formed the principal novelty brought forward last month at Newcastle, in the course of a series of festival performances given, under the direction of Mr. Rea, in aid of the infirmary of that city. The new work, which was received with considerable favour, has been described as one which reflects the solid genius of English ecclesiastical music, though the influence of more modern composers is here and there felt in it. The principal vocal parts were sustained by Mme. Patey, Mr. E. Lloyd, and Mr. Lewis Thomas, the choruses being sung by the members of Mr. Rea's choir. Dr. Armes himself conducted, and Mr. Albion Alderson presided at the organ.

MR. F. E. GLADSTONE, Mus. Bac. Cantab., has been appointed organist and master of the choristers at Norwich Cathedral.

MR. WILLIAM CHAPPELL, F.S.A., read a paper entitled "Music a Science of Numbers," at the first meeting of the fourth session of the Musical Association, on the 5th ult. At the next meeting (on the 3rd instant) Mr. W. G. Cummings has engaged to supply a paper on "The Establishment of a National Musical Library"—a subject of universal interest.

THE Royal Normal College and Academy of Music for the Blind, Upper Norwood, has recently been presented with a donation of £2,000 from an old friend of the institution. This large sum has been given in the hope that others will come forward and relieve the college from the remaining debt of £4,000, incurred for building and outfit, and which is the main obstacle to the full development of this national work for the welfare of the blind.

DR. HANS VON BÜLOW, as we are authorised to announce, has definitely accepted the post of Hof-Kapellmeister at Hanover, and will enter upon his duties there at the beginning of the new year. The appointment, which is one of the German Government, is tenable for life, and terminable only at his own desire. One of the conditions of his engagement is that he shall be at liberty to produce periodically an opera of his own selection. For the first exercise of this prerogative he has already made choice of Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini*.

HERR MAX BRUCH, whose *Odysseus* has recently been performed with success both at Liverpool and at Manchester, has been commissioned by the Birmingham Festival Committee to compose a cantata for their next musical festival, in 1879.

HERR JOACHIM RAFF has been appointed director of the Conservatoire of Music at Frankfurt. His eighth symphony, entitled "Frühlingsklänge," has just been published in score, and in parts, and for pianoforte (four hands) by C. F. W. Siegel, of Leipzig.

WAGNER, it is rumoured, has consented to allow Signor Pallini, of the Hamburg Stadt Theatre, to produce his trilogy, or rather tetralogy, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, at his theatre. The date is not yet fixed; but it will be placed upon the stage with effects equal to, and, if possible, with greater care than at Bayreuth in 1875. Its production at Mannheim has also been determined upon. This is owing to the exertions of Herr Heckel, one of the managers of the Mannheim Theatre, and one of Wagner's most active supporters. Herr Unger, the Bayreuth "Siegfried," is to take the hero's part; and the trilogy will be conducted by Franck's successor, under whose direction *Die Walküre* has been produced at Pesh.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"MANCHESTER."—In addition to his books upon Beethoven—"Beethoven et ses trois Styles," and "Beethoven: eine Kunststudie"—W. de Lenz has since published a book about pianists, entitled "Die grossen Pianoforte-virtuosen unserer Zeit, aus persönlicher Bekanntschaft." It treats of Liszt, Chopin, Henselt, and Tausig. An abridged translation of the article upon Liszt appeared in the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD, July, 1872. A translation of that upon Tausig, which is already in type, will shortly appear in our columns. Either of the above-mentioned works may be obtained on order of any foreign book or music-seller.

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(XV.).

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